

# The Crusades

## Then and Now

*Seeking the truth beneath the maze of distortions and image-making, using non-Muslim sources exclusively, from the birth of "revealed" religions to today's Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Chechnya, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, etc.*

[ Updated Second Edition, April 2004 ]

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Vol. I

## All Victims of Religious and Ethnic Fanaticism

*Sadly, the repeated warnings in the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of this book, three months before 9/11, were all too accurate. Today's acts of violence by Muslim extremists must be condemned by one and all. They victimize innocent civilians and lead to hate towards all Muslims. But these terrorist acts must serve as a final warning to Muslims and non-Muslims of conscience, to see that truth in history is no longer relegated to the ashes of obscurity with false concerns about raking up the past. This violence cannot be countered as the US regime is doing, with media power, and the use military force that kills thousands of innocents, torturing suspects, ignoring due process. Just causes do not die away. Violent repression only serves fanatics and devious politicians on both sides and it leads to greater anger among the victimized. The germs of today's cancer have accumulated steadily over 1400 years. The civilized approach is to truthfully examine the causes and correct them.*

*"Though God cannot change the past, historians can" said Samuel Butler. They have. There is a sad corollary to the cycle of violence this has triggered. It keeps Muslim intelligentsia and theologians from coolly discussing and implementing urgent reform in contemporary Muslim religious practices, which only Muslims can and should conduct, calmly, without outside interference.*

*In these dark days, we must always search for the silver lining. The "Peace Now Movement" is finally awakening again in Israel. An October '03 EU study among 7,500 citizens revealed that Israel is seen as "the top threat to world peace". Britons of principle have resigned from government in protest against Bush-Blair excesses. Even without Lord Ashdown, Liberal Democrats speak out. Citizens in millions have protested US-UK invasion of Iraq. We have an absolute treasure in Michael Moore. But more than ever, US needs truthful media commentators like Briton's Robert Fisk and honest innocents like Spanish TV's Lorenza Mila, who numbed C-Span's "host" after Spain's train tragedy, by asking why the US blindly supports Israel in everything.*

*While we focus, correctly, on Muslim fanatics, we must not be blind to recent disclosures that confirm fears some of us have had, that the Bush regime is tied to the apron-strings of Judeo-Christian fanatics who want Armageddon now. If true, we will suffer more horrors and dirty tricks before November.*

*John Kerry must be elected in November, with the fervent hope that he is free of fanaticism, and still has the courage he displayed in Vietnam and the moral integrity he displayed on his return.. Truman demanded the UN resolution that divided Palestine to create Israel for long-suffering Jews. The Jews deserved that. But the US owes it to the world now to make Israel, its financial dependent, accept those borders without more delays, more demands, more killings. Otherwise, with old anger and new fury from George W Bush's excesses, we may well have a man-made Armageddon in a world overflowing with nuclear, chemical and biological agents of death...*



"You have just taken an oath of allegiance to the United States. Of allegiance to whom? Of allegiance to no one, unless it be to God – certainly not of allegiance to those who temporarily represent this great government. You have taken an oath of allegiance to a great deal, to a great body of principles, to a great hope of the human race. And while you bring all countries with you, you come with a purpose of leaving all other countries behind you – bringing what is best in their spirit, but not looking over your shoulders seeking to perpetuate what you intend to leave behind in them... You cannot become thorough Americans if you think of yourselves in groups. A man who thinks of himself as belonging to a particular national group in America has not yet become an American...

"My urgent advice to you would be, not only always to think first of America, but always, also, to think first of humanity. *You do not love humanity if you seek to divide humanity into jealous camps.* Humanity can be welded together only by love, by sympathy, by justice, not by jealousy and hatred. *I am sorry for the man who seeks to make personal capital out of the passions of his fellowmen. He has lost touch with the ideal of America.* For America was created to unite mankind... if some of us have forgotten what America believed in, you, at any rate, imported a renewal of that belief. That is the reason that I, for one, make you welcome. If I have in any degree forgotten what America was intended for, I will thank God if you will remind me. I was born in America. *You dreamed dreams of what America was to be, and I hope you brought the dreams with you.* No man who does not see visions will even realize any high hopes or undertake any high enterprise. Just because you brought dreams with you, America is more likely to realize dreams such as you brought. You are enriching us if you come expecting us to be better than we are..."

President Woodrow Wilson  
To Americans of Foreign Birth, 1915

"As the government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion, as it has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion or tranquility of Musselmen [sic] and as the said States never have entered into any act of war or hostility against any Mehometan [sic] nation, it is declared by the parties, that no pretext arising from religious opinions shall ever produce an interruption of the harmony that exists between the two countries" **Treaty of George Washington's government with Algeria, 1796** (*Treaties, Conventions, International Acts, Protocols and Agreements between the US and Other Powers, Vol. 2*)

"The nation that indulges towards another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degree a slave... [This] produces a variety of evils... it gives to ambitious, corrupt and deluded citizens... facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country." **George Washington's Farewell Address To The Nation, 1802**

Thomas Jefferson's letter to Thomas Leiper, 1815: "I consider the government of England as totally without morality ... lost in corruption... hostile to liberty wherever it endeavors to show its head, and eternal disturber of the peace of the world." Jefferson letter to Caesar Rodney, 1815. "As to Britain, Our government, I say, have still been overawed from a contest with them, and has ever countenanced and strengthened their influence [upon us] by proposing new establishments with authority to swindle yet great sums from our citizens. This is the British influence to which I am an enemy and which we must subject to our government, or it will subject us to them."

"You must not speak of us [Americans] ... as cousins, still less as brothers; we are neither. Neither must you think of us as Anglo-Saxons, for that term can no longer be rightly applied to the people of the United States. Nor must too much importance in this connection be attached to the fact that English is our common language... No, there are only two things which can establish and maintain close relations between your country and mine: they are community of ideals and of interests"<sup>26</sup> **President Woodrow Wilson to King Edward VII, 1917**

"Some men see things as they are, and say: 'Why?' I dream of things that never were and say: 'Why not?'" **Senator Robert Kennedy/George Bernard Shaw**

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## Preface to 2nd edition, April 2004

It has been agony, beyond words, to wait three years after June 2001 when the first edition of this book came out and further printing was stopped at my request. There was demand and I needed money. But my conscience would not let me risk arousing more hysteria post 9/11, instead of calm reflection, which a book like this requires.

I even thought of changing the book title for this edition, as events since 1993 (when I first registered it at The Library of Congress), have proved my fears were so accurate that even the word "crusade" has re-emerged among fanatics on both sides. But I should not allow fanatics to rule what may be my last major effort to plead for sanity.

When I moved to Northern Virginia from New York in 1993 to conduct serious research for this book at the Library of Congress, I registered an early draft and the title *The Crusades: Then and Now* with the LOC copyright office, then searched for a foundation to finance my project. I tried hard but what I saw as extremely urgent need to have a book like this out before another 1095 AD hit us again at the New Millennium did not register with any Muslim scholar or foundation in the 1990s. I decided I must keep going on my own as far as my meager savings lasted. I had chosen the title *The Crusades: Then and Now* not because I expected battlefields littered with corpses as in the early Crusades, but because I felt serious action was needed to stop the latent, subconscious Crusading state of mind from being ignited by the ungodly pretending to be the godly. With the new US regime ignoring Zionist injustices entirely, I feared blind fury from Muslim extremists was inevitable, leading to more fierce Zionist response. Into this explosive cauldron, there were Christian extremists seeking to ignite Armageddon to expedite the Second Coming, inviting Zionists as partners, in a world overflowing with nuclear, chemical and germ agents of death.

The sleepless nights from the daily atrocities in Bosnia wore out my strong constitution. Three surgeries followed one another. I considered giving up my research. But by this time, I had discovered so much shocking new material, I had to keep going.

I believed, in undertaking this project, that I was peculiarly qualified for it. I still do. I have lived most of my life away from the Muslim society, in India, in UK



and in the US, but my many years in ad agencies and multinationals have qualified me to recognize not just obvious Western prejudices that current events and media reporting reveal, but the subtleties, the nuances in juxtaposed reporting. My lifelong love of jazz music, tennis, art, literature had drawn me most of my life to non-Muslim environs where I was not identified as a Muslim, so I had seen prejudice expressed in the raw, at times, against Islam. I have always felt it was vital for Muslims to recognize the reality of the wall against their credibility that has been built over centuries. I knew that must be dismantled with facts, before genuine rapport with the non-Muslim world can be sought. I found it pathetic to hear well-meaning Muslims argue *ad nauseum* that non-Muslims could be won over by pointing out that Muslims believe in the same God, believe in the Judaic prophets. They did not realize that understanding and respect between the faiths can never be achieved until the West is made to realize, with irrefutable evidence, that truth about Islam and historical facts have not been taught to them. Without that, Judeo-Christian fanatics, aided at times by media, would continue to incite the "People of the Book", against Muslims. Tokenistic rapport can exist. Most Christians and Jews are fair-minded. Some are warmed by the gushing generosity that Muslims usually employ to win non-Muslims. Non-Muslims do become friends with Muslims, a few have even converted. But prejudice and ignorance of facts still rule. Professor John Draper of New York University, a unique 19th century intellectual, wrote it was shameful that the vital role of Muslims in civilizing mankind had been deliberately suppressed for so long. He was certain it would have to be recognized soon. But he wrote that 150 years ago!

We must recognize that we are in danger of a worldwide holocaust that can only be stopped by a public movement, with minds educated with the truth about the past, not the propaganda that has been the mainstay of Western education. I firmly believe that if millions of fair-minded were to see irrefutable proof using Western sources of how they have been brainwashed, their innate goodness would prevail and they would realize the grave injustices have created terrorists where none existed. And once the Western masses see that and demand change, the present horror can end quickly.

Minds inclined towards fascism have turned instantly to saying "kill, kill, kill" as the "patriotic" solution, especially when hundreds of billions have been spent to create the most deadly military force the world has ever known. But the civilized mind should see that it is not weakness to recognize that great injustices have been done to Muslims in the past, and continues to be done today. Are Muslims pristine pure innocents? Of course not. Many Muslims will be very upset with me for my criticism and reforms I suggest in this book. But none of the reforms in Muslim societies and its practices can even be discussed fruitfully, even among Muslims, until the present state of perpetual crisis is ended. And that crisis exists from the actions of a fanatical few in the West.

Once the Muslim masses recognize that there is genuine change in the Western outlook, not eyewash, Muslim masses (always keen for good relations with the West) will begin to withdraw their emotional support for the few Muslims who are

committed to terrorism. That extremely violent element can then be singled out easily for fair retribution. But this change in Western attitude must be real, not cosmetic. Sadly, it may not happen until there is a new US administration. *The barbarism displayed by Western acts in Iraq this past year require more than repeated claims of being "civilized"*.

Why have even moderate Muslims become so angry in recent years? Take the trouble to read this book, and think about what you knew and what you did not know before reading it. Most Western leaders and members of its media are decent, conscientious but they too have been brainwashed from childhood, and the brainwash goes back 1400 years. Nothing proves this more forcefully than the fact that Thomas Jefferson, my personal hero, in a letter to Dr. Stiles in 1815, wrote this: "It is really a pity so charming a country [Turkey] should remain in the hands of a people whose religion forbids the admission of science and the arts among them."<sup>17</sup> This truly civilized mind, a voracious reader in various European languages, clearly believed this, because this view is all he found expressed in the books he read. And that was before the hypnotic power of visual media, its blatant excesses and psychological weapons. Responsible non-Muslim scholars of the 19th century did their best to correct the abominable lies, but they were a mere handful. Such honesty is found even less among writers of today.

The brainwash against Islam has been so intense that even fair-minded non-Muslims, including non-Muslim leaders, are convinced, at least subconsciously, that practicing Muslims lack intelligent acumen, otherwise they would not be Muslims and can therefore be easily fooled. So Western Think Tanks and media feel that a crash course in "basics" about Islam and Muslim lands is all you need to become "experts", file reports using seedy local Muslims to fill the gaps. So we have had extraordinary blunders in Western dealings with the Muslim world, especially after the US became its leader. Of course it is not all through ignorance. Chicanery, political objectives, fanaticism, and money, as always, weigh heavily in the equation, but ignorance plays a key role.

Today, wild Muslim terrorists pose a great danger. But Judeo-Christian fanatics pose the greatest danger as they have enormous power. They can plan each scenario to provoke the Muslims, then move in to "retaliate". Reagan won, with record advertising and media support. But to fanatical Christians, (who hated Carter for his morality) Reagan's victory was God's miracle, to prepare the world for the Second Coming. Today they proclaim that only those who share their belief will be welcomed by Jesus Christ to eternal bliss. Bush Jr. says he was chosen by God and the Evangelists firmly believe in him as their leader. Every trick possible was used to get Bush to win. Yet Gore won the popular vote, despite the shenanigans in Florida (where Jeb Bush is governor) that kept large number of votes uncounted and many voters unable to vote. The Florida Supreme Court demanded that all votes must be counted even if it took days after the deadline, as the new president did not take office until January 20. But Bush lawyers went to the US Supreme Court where Republicans appointees have a majority. It ruled 5-4 (by one vote)

that all vote counts must stop. So George Bush won. A miracle, said the evangelists. The end justifies the means. *Goodness is not important, Faith is.*

No doubt there are responsible officials in the Bush regime. But to believe that they direct policy today is to be *criminally stupid*. In CBS' 60 Minutes segment *Zion's Christian Soldiers*, aired March 18 2004, even Bob Simon of CBS, (a passionate supporter of Israel, always) provided a sobering appraisal of the Zionist and Christian evangelist union and its implications. It is common knowledge today that Bush's strong alliance with the Evangelists (numbering over 70 million, according to their leader Jerry Falwell) has had serious ramifications the world over, including the crushing of the Peace Now movement in Israel, while Bush embraced Sharon as "a man of peace" though he indulges in unrestrained brutality towards the Palestinians. "When the chips are down, Ariel Sharon [Israel PM] can trust George Bush to do the right thing" proclaimed Jerry Falwell, leader of the Christian Evangelists to Simon. "*We are his core constituency*" he said. Sharon himself was jubilant at one recent evangelical convention of American Evangelical Christians in Israel. "With our new solidarity, we will win, *we will win*" Sharon roared to hysterical applause. A former Colgate-Palmolive executive, founder of the Moral Majority in the 1950s, the parent body of the Evangelist Christians, told Simon "The end of days is upon us... Every grain of sand from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean belongs to the Jews for all times." The Jews who refuse to move from Palestinian lands are fully backed by the Evangelists who told Simon these are the true Jews, who are "saved". *The Evangelists believe strongly that it was at God's instructions that Israel's PM Rabin was killed, because he signed the Oslo Peace Accord, promising to return some lands (given to Palestinians by the UN in 1948) back to them. Rabin "was going against the Word of God" Kay Arthur, Tennessee's top woman Evangelist told Simon "The agreement made by Rabin was a sin... No person dies accidentally. I believe God did not want that Oslo Accord to come through"* Kay Arthur said.

Any thinking person should now realize that while Palestinian militancy is self-defeating, Zionist-Christian extremists have *seduced* them to this suicidal policy. Christian extremists firmly believe that Jesus is about to re-appear, there will be seven years of hell on earth in Armageddon wars in Israel, ending with the extermination of all the Evil Ones. *These "Evil Ones" are all Muslims (even though they believe that Jesus was a major prophet of God) but Hindus, Buddhists, etc. are also Evil. So are Christians who do not accept evangelical beliefs, as well as two-thirds of Jews who will still refuse to accept Jesus Christ as Savior. One-third of the Jews will accept Jesus as Son of God and will be saved.* "You love the Jews, but you want them destroyed?" complains Bob Simon "We do not say so" Kay Arthur replies "The Bible tells us". "But you are saying they are going to be destroyed" Simon persists "I'm not saying it, God is saying it" said Arthur. Armageddon will be followed by 1000 years of blissful rule by Christ. "I think Muhammad was a terrorist" Jerry Falwell told Simon. Falwell and other Evangelists have said this and more, to denigrate the Muslim prophet and his family on mainstream media (including CBS) and constantly on the round-the-clock Christian

Broadcasting (TV and radio) networks. This time Falwell told Simon that Christians and Jews are on one side, Muslims on the other. "Those lines were drawn more than a thousand years ago" Falwell told Simon. That is a lie. Simon did *not* correct him. The fact is Christians were slaughtering Jews as "Christ-killers" 1000 years ago, and Muslims were saving them from extinction. Falwell frequently condemns Muhammad and his family as sexually lewd, and so do other Evangelists, even Billie Graham's son Franklin.

Many Christians are uneasy at these repeated provocations, and with Israel's extremism. But these comments are clearly *intended* to provoke Muslims to greater "terrorism". As I stated even in the 2001 edition of this book (p.475) Christian extremists were demanding an Armageddon against Islam after the election of Reagan, but while they had strong support in the Reagan regime, the USSR was still alive and saw its sympathy for the Muslim world as *its* salvation. Today Judeo-Christian extremists believe that with media, plus the "Left Behind" novels and movies they have brought out in the Reagan-Bush era, inviting Armageddon, condemning evil Islam, they have even won millions of moderates over.

In 1974/5, Ariel Sharon's mass massacre of Palestinian civilians in refugee camps in Lebanon drew such world-wide anger that Israel was forced to sack him as Defense Minister. But now he is Prime Minister and hugely popular in Israel due to the support he has from George W and the Evangelists. Abe Foxman, head of the American Anti-Defamation League, told Simon he supports the Evangelists fully now, says it does not matter what their reasons are, but they are a great help to Israel. But others, even of Israel's extreme rightwing, are critical. Jason Isaacson, 12 yrs with Mossad (Israel's CIA) and now Director of American Jewish Committee told Simon "what these people [Evangelists] are encouraging Israel and the US administration to do is out and out disaster". *He told Simon he is very worried as he saw Falwell's view "reflected in the words of the Bush administration"*. He said Bush's comments about "the Evil Ones (Iran, Syria, North Korea)" are very provocative. "It is not good for Jews (to have such open religious hostility)" Until two decades ago, Isaacson and his type were seen even by some in US media as wild, irresponsible fanatics. Now their views are "mainstream".

\* \* \* \* \*

In today's neo-fascist era in which we know people can be put away without trial, and torture, I have been advised to provide as much information as I can about my past and my beliefs on a variety of issues, so that the ungodly may not easily distort or misrepresent me, even with media at their disposal. What Mark Twain called the Silent Lie (keeping the public from even knowing about this book) would probably be the most effective weapon in media's monopolistic hands, anyway. It has worked before.

I have not been part of Muslim societies before or after I migrated to the US in January 1965, except as a writer after I took to Islam 30 years ago. Sometimes,



I have written so critically on some issues about the Muslim world, that well-wishers warned me I could be physically attacked by *both sides*. I was not. My social interests have always been very different from most Muslims, even my beliefs in how to respond on political issues often at variance with them. In 1994, I attended some meetings of the American Task Force on Bosnia, seeking an end to the Bosnian holocaust. To counter the Serb propaganda that Bosnia was a "Muslim" revolt, I repeatedly asked B'nai B'rith members of that Task Force to get on TV as Jewish Americans to urge Americans to stop the carnage in Bosnia. Neither B'nai B'rith nor the Arabs or other Muslims backed my idea, *for different reasons*, I believe. So I withdrew entirely to research for this book at the LOC.

I had decided to use *only* non-Muslim sources. *But it was critical to closely study the fine print* in the unexpurgated editions of respected historians across 2000 years. So my research would have taken years anyway. But it took much longer with three serious surgeries (including heart quintuple bypass) in this period. The first edition of this book was finally published by Binghamton University's Institute of Global Studies on June 4, 2001. I had pleaded with Global to get the book out before the 2000 elections. But Global, having seen the completed MSS in August 2000, was not pleased with the book's content, its warnings and predilections. It even tried to get out of the contract, then wanted to print only a paperback edition *instead of the two-volume hardback agreed upon in the contract*. They said it would take six more months if I insisted on the two-volume hardback. Desperate now, I agreed to the one-volume paperback. Even that took until June 2001. *But it did come out three months before the wretched September 11 horror.*

By the time I had emerged in June 2001 with my book, and from my self-imposed isolation, the political world had become a nightmare. I had voted for Al Gore, but George W. Bush was president after the most controversial presidential election in US history, more so even than the "victory" of Rutherford Hayes over Samuel Tilden.

An even greater shock followed. American Muslims had voted *as a bloc* for Mr. Bush. I did not know whether to laugh or cry. I think I did both. American Muslims are a fortunate few of the millions who yearn to come to the West for economic gains. Most have come from the 1980s onwards. Third World Muslim immigrants suffer considerable humiliation in their daily life in the US, especially if they are religious. They live and socialize mainly in Muslim communities they have created. Most are from very humble backgrounds in the Old World, been exposed for the first time to Western lifestyle and luxury; most are genuinely moral, decent, just seeking upward mobility.

I went to the American Muslim Council convention in June 2001 with the just-published first edition of this book. It was like crossing *The Twilight Zone*. The AMC now had a slogan: "From Dream to Mainstream" and *speakers happily praised every Bush proposal on every issue*. In 1986/7, when I had met some American Muslim groups while promoting my 1986 book *The Rape of a Noble Ideology: USA in Perspective 1783-1985*, Muslim leaders expressed only mild interest in US history or the Middle East. But I now heard that many Muslim

leaders, after years of being pariahs in the US, had soared to Cloud Nine at being wooed by Bush's strategists. They had induced their communities to vote for Mr. Bush in 2000. Those crucial Muslim votes tipped the scale for Bush in some states. Muslim leaders proudly proclaimed this until a year ago. *Some still do today.*

The AMC Executive Director in June 2001 was someone I had known years before when I had been appointed by the Saudis to take charge in the US of IPA and Arabia magazine (I resigned in six months); he worked for a sister concern. I met him again when my 1986 book came out. At the time, he still had no interest in US politics, as he planned to return to Libya, he said, depose Gaddafi and take charge! Now, in June 2001, he greeted me effusively, promised to speak about my new book from the podium all through the weekend convention. *Of course he did not even mention the book from the podium.* Nor was I invited to speak. He did invite me to a White House session for Muslims the next day at which VP Cheney was to speak (Cheney did not, Rove did). Knowing I was not a Bush supporter, he made me promise that I would be silent at the White House meeting. I promised. I wanted to be there to observe. No questions were taken anyway, from *anyone*. Delegates had come from all across the US; they were told to submit questions in writing and *warned not to ask anything about foreign policy at all.*

Muslim "think tanks", like IIIT, had sought my views on US politics in past years. But in 2000, clearly intoxicated by the wooing of Karl Rove's team, Muslim leaders had discarded their political diapers and became overnight experts. *In 1979, Iran's new leaders, thrilled with media spotlight, similarly discarded their political diapers, became experts overnight, refused to listen to warnings about the Reaganites and their tricks.*

I did try to meet other Muslim leaders after the first edition of this book came out in June '04. One top Muslim leader to whom I sent a copy, left me a voicemail, calling the book "monumental". He later invited me to their next convention. *But he never invited me to speak there, or at their community centers, or write in their magazines.* I had stopped Binghamton University from further printing after 9/11, it was agony to do so as I needed money, but I was convinced the hysterical climate was not right for this book. But when Falwell in a CBS interview, continued to attack, calling Muhammad a terrorist, among other things, some Muslim leaders did express token protests in media. But I worried that Muslim extremists would react with violence (which Falwell no doubt wanted) unless *someone* made a substantive response to Falwell, point by point.

So a week after Falwell's interview I wrote a piece "*An Open Letter to Jerry Falwell*". Mainstream press refused it. But the editor of an LA Muslim magazine liked it, published it, asked if it could also appear in the next issue of a weekly publication he edited. I said okay. *But it did not appear there for over a month. Instead, another article appeared in that weekly, with the same headline as mine, but written by a Muslim leader, who entreated Falwell in it to visit them with his fellow Evangelists, at this leader's expense, to discuss Islam! My "Open Letter..." did finally appear but after that. I like to believe the editor has principles but was over-ruled, made to perform this charade.*



The perennial Muslim inferiority complex has reached new heights in the current climate. With it, plagiarism is also more rampant than ever. I have learnt of several instances of Muslims picking material from my *Crusades* book in their speeches, in writings. Stealing another person's written material is common, especially in the Third World, by Muslims too, who then piously claim they did it for Islam! *I would not mind it if they did this even without taking my permission, as long as they named my book as the source.* Two reasons for that: One, anything they stole could be pounced upon by critics if it was skimpy, out of context with other data in the book. Two, I was/am broke, needed publicity for the 2nd edition, whenever it came out.

If all this seems like American-Muslim bashing, I should add that there are Muslims who consider this is theft and a great sin. Also, I must add a word about other Muslims, in the US and elsewhere I have met, the quiet, devout men and women, who do not use donations to arrange expensive dinners to entertain US officials, or use their magazines to plaster their own photographs all the time. As to character, I know of some American Muslims like one department store owner, a quiet religious, unassuming man who, knowing my financial paralysis, offered his help in getting my book into distribution, even though I'm sure he may not care for some of what I have said. There are Muslims like him around the world whose depth of faith I envy, who lead quiet, pious lives.

But they don't have influence over US Muslims, Muslim leaders do. In 2000, those leaders fiercely sold Bush to their communities believing all that Bush aides fed them. This is why single-issue voting is dangerous. Single-issue politics trivializes Islam, and has harmed inexperienced Muslims and their image greatly in the US in the past.

Let me explain. President Bush Jr. is said to be a good man and fun socially, not at all evil. Even if true, *does it matter?* The fact is, even if he is not an extreme Evangelical fanatic himself, those who stage his policies are. After Nixon, the Republican image was that of a corrupt party with no morals. So Judeo-Christianity was brought Front-Center in every way in the Reagan campaign even though he was not known as a churchgoer. But he was selected for his outer husk, his acting experience and *his inability to think for himself.* It seems Reagan genuinely felt those who had become very rich must have all the right answers, *even for the country.* Big Money and the best strategists and speechwriters money could buy, were bought to mold Reagan. The results were spectacular. Reagan became an adored icon of the masses, despite his constant blunders of facts, the scandals and disasters of his presidency. *There are Republicans of integrity and solid values, even today. But after the Reagan "miracle", Republican kingmakers believe politicians with convictions do not make good candidates.*

Jesus warned that you cannot be the servant of two masters, God and Money. Most politicians of all stripes ignore this warning from Jesus, today, the same vital warning as *Shirk* in Islam (i.e., considering anyone or anything more important than God).

*Do Muslims commit Shirk when they try to win worldly benefits (which*

*seldom come about anyway) by siding with politicians who are openly for the Very Rich and of questionable aims?* In the 1980s, Reagan arm-twisted Muslim billionaires to donate huge amounts to the scurvy Nicaraguan Contras. Muslims gave, hoping to make Reagan evenhanded in US's Middle East policy. That never happened. Like Reagan, George W. may not have known of exploitative plans of his policymakers and, like Muslims in the Reagan era, Muslims rather stupidly hoped that Bush's Evangelical strategists would embrace them too. So US Muslims have today a reinforced image of being (1) terrorists or (2) frightened stooges of the Bush regime or (3) having no concern for non-Muslim poor. Against this, most Jews are still seen as having compassion for all poor.

Pragmatism makes sense for Muslims if you plan against possible roadblocks you are bound to face. Muslims came in large numbers to the US in recent years. I have reported in the past how American Arabs of the 1970s, trained in political science, used Oil Money to start an Arab Lobby to match what Jews and other Special Interests were doing in Washington. *They disagreed if you warned them that while it was essential to try to buy influence in Washington, it was very naïve for Arabs and Muslims to ignore the ethnic and religious prejudice they would face, that Jewish lobbies would not.* No sooner did the Arabs begin, then media suddenly focused on lobbies in Washington and named the new Arab lobby. Then the FBI launched a "Sting" operation, with a Jewish actor playing an Arab billionaire operating from a luxury suite in Washington. His FBI "staff" approached selected US elected officials, offering money for favors. Hidden cameras recorded the meetings at which money was offered to the Congressmen and Senators. NBC's producer Ira Silverman and reporter Brian Ross had been brought in to work with the FBI operators. *They even aired the actual FBI charge of Senator Williams of New Jersey at his home.* He argued he was forced to take money, but it was no use. He was the first Senator in US history to be expelled from office by a vote in the US Senate.

I was glared at by media at a session in the UN lounge, for asking the following: if the FBI had set up this *Sting* to trap corrupt Senators and Congressmen, *why was the billionaire made an Arab? Would that not keep elected US officials, who are totally pro-Israel, from being tested as they would never come near an "Arab" billionaire's office?*

\* \* \* \* \*

Because we live in neo-fascist times, I have decided to disclose as much as I can about my beliefs and attitudes as a safeguard against mudslinging and wild charges.

Back in 1966, less than two years after I arrived in the US, Republican Senator George Murphy (a close friend of Ronald Reagan, who sponsored Reagan into politics) raised a Bill in the Senate (Bill #3284) to make me a permanent resident. I had then been made an honorary member of the Young Republicans, invited to functions, even one in 1967 to meet Reagan, the gubernatorial candidate. Democratic

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Congressman Tom Rees raised a similar Bill in the House in 1967 to make me a permanent resident (Bill # 2731). On the strength of these Bills, I was allowed to work in the US even before I got my "Green Card". I socialized far more with Republicans (most corporate executives were Republican) than with Democrats. But gradually, as I understood American politics better, and Richard Nixon was chosen the 1968 Republican presidential candidate, I moved away. While I believe strongly in meritocracy, even that Business should not be strangled with too many laws, and that you cannot force equality in a simpleminded way, I did not trust Nixon. Ingratitude? I don't think so. A Democratic Bill had also been raised for me. Importantly, I felt that my loyalty, my patriotism, is to the US and what I believe to be its best interests, not to clubs that compete to run it.

I have agreed with some Republicans in Congress since. But I strongly supported McGovern and Carter for President as true champions of goodness. I voted for Mondale as I liked Ferraro, as first woman VP. Aside from their blind ties to Israel, I agreed with Clinton and Gore strongly on most of their plans. Gore clearly wanted to end "soft money" corruption, and the ecology had no greater expert in politics. Like Clinton, he was very serious about Gun Control, despite threats from the powerful Gun Lobby of the IRA. I was so enthused about Hillary Rodham Clinton's efforts to end the blatant corruption in the US medical industry that I tried in my small way to support it with radio essays in 1994. I wrote often to Gore, entreating him to speak out openly during the 2000 campaign about what Corporate TV was doing to the moral fiber of the US and its "subtle" Republican alignment. Evidence exists to prove TV has found ways to undermine Democrats, from McGovern onwards. I certainly was not surprised to hear that on election night, Jack Walsh, GE's Chairman (GE owns NBC) spent the night at NBC election headquarters to ensure no network comments favored Gore.

I was furious when Gore, clearly desperate when poll figures showed Bush gaining due to Media/Bradley/Nader negative comments against Gore, had chosen Lieberman. But after some thought, I was willing to accept even this. As I said in this book's 2001 edition (page 570), the argument made by some prominent "intellectuals" that we should cast protest votes for Nader, was silly. It was like the tantrums of Eugene McCarthy voters in 1968 who rejected Humphrey. That gave Nixon a wafer-thin victory and we are still living in the gruesome legacy of that stupidity. I believed Lieberman, as VP, would be pressured by other Jewish aspirants for high office against being too obviously pro-Israel, as that would jeopardize their own hopes for high office.

Bush's current pro-Israel policy is so much more blatant even than Clinton's was, that it will, from now on, be looked upon as the American policy, not Jewish or Gentile. In fact Bush's strong support for Sharon clearly made the Israelis give Sharon his resounding victory in January 2003, despite the genocide case against him in the Belgian courts at which the star witness against him suddenly died before he took the witness stand.

I have said, with examples, in this book and repeatedly in the past elsewhere, there are some shining examples of Jews of principles who have been very critical

of Israel. They have suffered for it, have been virtually censored off from TV in the "free world". In recent years, a few Republicans have bravely condemned Israel's control over the US elected officials as have a few Democrats but they are usually forced out of office. *If we did not have a system so corrupt that it makes politicians so dependent on contributions and advertising, many more would stand for their beliefs.* Often a lone voice forty years ago, Democratic Senator William Fulbright bravely criticized the US for coddling Israel at such great cost to US interests. For doing so, even this remarkable American, an early critic of Joe McCarthy and the Vietnam War as well, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations, actually lost his Senate seat. Prominent Republican Congressmen Findlay and McCloskey, among others, sacrificed their careers opposing pro-Israel policies. Democratic Senator Robert Byrd's speech in September 2002 against blatant US pro-Israel bias, was one of the most moving speeches of recent times in the Senate. He has consistently spoken out with courage. Will he survive the next election?

People have asked me recently what made me so certain about what was to come that I decided to spend over ten years and just about all my savings working on this book. The fact is everyone should have seen it coming if they studied history objectively, the hysteria at the end of the First Millennium and what was clear by the start of the 1990s.

The details about Reagan's Iran-Contra affair, how his aides, from Pointdexter to Oliver North to Seacord and others showed contempt for Law and Democracy, convicted yet won behind Reagan's simple mindedness. It told you neo-fascists were gaining serious control of the US.

Saddam Hussein was made the West's hero by Reagan and Bush Sr., even protected by the US from any UN resolution for his use of chemical weapons upon Iranians and Iraq's Kurds. But after the Iraq-Iran War that killed a million, the US decided Saddam had served his purpose, and turned on Saddam as Israel had long demanded. Saddam's greed for oil had also clashed with that of Texas oilmen. The moronic Saddam still thought he was Bush Sr.'s close buddy when he invited US Ambassador Glaspie and informed her he planned to invade Kuwait and take those border oil fields. According to the tape recording he produced later, *Glaspie said the US was not concerned with quarrels among Arabs.* But then Bush and Thatcher decided this crisis was perfect to counter growing demands for a "peace dividend". So Saddam became the Devil in Anglo-American eyes, after he took Kuwait, insisting it was part of Iraq, as it was in pre-colonial days. Similarly, the Reaganites had trained and armed the Taliban extremists to oust the Russians from Afghanistan. Then the US found the Taliban to be Devils, just as Bush Sr. decided his "bosom buddy" Noriega, longtime CIA agent, to be a Devil. Bush sent forces to invade Panama, capture President Noriega, bring him for a US trial and to jail in the US.

Why does the US public accept all this? Because Corporate media glamorizes Anglo-American Machiavellian cunning through movies and TV as essential to deal with Muslims and most Browns and Blacks. The American public is now so brainwashed and sees the Muslim world as so evil that any devious acts against



them are fine, and the old Jeffersonian belief in "one code of morality" is ancient and outmoded.

In this book, I have commented, as always, upon Jewish suffering through the centuries and true Jewish heroes *never* recognized by Western media and therefore by the public. Muslims protected Jews for centuries when Jews suffered under Christian butchery. Now Jews have switched alliances. Ironically, Israel uses past suffering of Jews at Christian hands as nauseum for their own excesses against Muslims. Most Jews have been so intoxicated by media and Bush's blind support, they do not realize that there is real danger of reviving real anti-Semitism, not the fake one its leaders use to arouse support. Jews, even more than Christians, are fed media lies all their lives (especially in Israel) and do not realize the intensity of Muslim righteous anger. Muslims extremists know history, they read and watch Muslim media that report them freely, not Western corporate propaganda. *These Muslim reports might be exaggerated, one-sided versions, but they are, at the core, closer to the truth than Western media's one-sided reporting today*. The fury of Muslim extremists grows day by day. Fluency in English is very rare among Muslim political activists; in any case, they are no match for Western politicians trained by experts. So some Muslims when blinded by rage resort to violence. It is the only form of retaliation they know hurts the other side.

*What is especially dangerous is that today, even after September 11, Judeo-Christian extremists continue to provoke Muslim extremists towards wild actions. Their intent is clear.* Even aside from the Evangelical extremists, a large mass of Judeo-Christians have been brainwashed from the Reagan era onwards and feel that with the enormous military power the US has, Wild West policies are best, as they do not require much thinking or knowledge. We Are The Greatest, we have the greatest military might, our religion is the only right one, just kill, kill, kill those who do not accept our orders. Many of the Pentagon Brass agree, they always fear that if they do not use our military arsenals often, today's \$415 Billion budget (plus the Iraq additions) might be cut. Of course the loudest cheers for this come from "evangelists" like Jerry Falwell, Jerry Vine, Billie Graham's son Franklin, Pat Robertson. They have gone into high gear these days, seeking to provoke Muslim extremists, calling Prophet Muhammad a "terrorist", attacking his marriages and those of his progeny. They feel secure in their belief that popular media will never focus on gory details of Joshua's massacre of all Canaanites he could find to take over their land because God told him to kill, kill, kill. In spreading Christianity, Constantine, Charlemagne and others slaughtered so many innocents that 19th century NYU Prof. John Draper wrote they "visibly reduced Europe's population". If Muhammad was copying Judeo-Christian prophets by naming and glorifying them, what should we make of the fact that the birth date of Mithra/Mithras (ancient Persian deity worshipped even in Europe for centuries before and in Jesus' era) was always been celebrated on December 25, as was Mithra's virgin birth? So much of his teaching and his end are identical to those of Jesus Christ. *A constructive explanation should be that Jesus Christ was a genuine messenger of God, with a reform message for Jews similar to that of Mithra for Persians and Indians. A*

*destructive one would be that the Jesus story is an imitation of Mithra... If Muhammad's sex life is to be constantly paraded in the worst light, what of the Biblical prophets? The Old Testament tells us Lot tried to get the gay men of Gomorrah to sleep with his two young daughters, the men refused, but the girls got Lot himself drunk and both raped their own father. There was David, who saw Bathsheba, had sex with her, then ordered a soldier to kill her husband Uriah, so he could marry Bathsheba himself. And he did. Solomon was their offspring. He had 300 wives, 700 concubines, and wrote the most erotic Songs. What about poor Onan, asked by God to impregnate his dead brother's wife? When he ejaculated instead on the ground, the Bible says God was so angry that he killed Onan. Moses killed a man in anger, unrelated to religion and another prophet mistook his own daughter-in-law for a prostitute and raped her.*

We could go on and on slinging dirt at each other's religions. Or we could accept the lifestyle of God's messengers in an era and milieu hard for us to understand. Let God be the judge of people He selected as His messengers. We are the created. Only He would know the truth behind these and other mysteries. What we do know is that Islam orders Muslims to respect the "people of the Book", never to deliberately wage war against them, always accept peace if the other side genuinely wants it, not just to regroup and fight again. We know from history that many times, Muslims (from Saladin onwards) could have slaughtered "the people of the Book" completely but, following Qur'anic directives of mercy, pulled back. History shows that, otherwise, Muslims would still be the rulers of the world. It is a heritage that Muslims should not be bitter about, but proud.

Most of us find it hard to realize how advanced Muslim beliefs were during its glorious past. Take just one example. In his last Crusading adventure, King Louis of France attacked Muslim Tripoli while he waited to join his allies, the Mongols, to launch yet another massacre upon Muslims in the Holy Land. But while he waited, he succumbed to the plague. "The local people [Tunisians] were charitable enough to erect a small shrine in Louis's memory, for they could see that, even though he hated them to his last breath, he was a genuinely religious man," says Armstrong. The Crusaders, on the other hand, "having declared him a martyr, were not keen to be contaminated by his flesh. Because the Crusaders were afraid that the body would decompose, they boiled the flesh off the bones" before sending the bones to France, adds Armstrong<sup>35</sup>.

Muslims have suffered over centuries through their acts of generosity, perhaps even invited exploitation. So Muslims today believe, rightly, that their generosity was thoroughly exploited by "the people of the Book". But nobility of character and compassion that prevailed among Muslims in past centuries should make the West realize how much suffering through injustice it has taken for Muslims of today to actually sympathize with terrorism against "the people of the Book". But to realize that, one must know facts.

The West has made September 11 the one tragedy worth remembering, (and it should be remembered and its innocent dead moaned) but media-trained Western masses seem to have forgotten that there have been other recent horrors of mass

killings and rapes of far greater number of innocents. Even aside from the perpetual Palestinian tragedy, remember the massacre in Bosnia? Western leaders ignored the daily killings and rape for three years, despite watching it on TV cameras, before finally stepping in. Why did they not step in earlier? *Some reporters did take that up for a while because it was too obvious and too ugly to ignore.* Badgered by reporters April 3, 1994, about why we did not step in and stop the killings, Clinton's flustered Defense Secretary William Perry finally blurted out "*We cannot get involved in the war on the side of the Muslims.*"

Then there was the Kosovo holocaust. NATO did finally end the havoc. Then Chechnya, which the West ignored and let Russia conduct shameless genocide. Most recently Afghanistan, Iraq. What is the truth in Azerbaijan? Algeria? In between, what most people do not realize is that the Pope called an unprecedented, urgent Second Synod at which he told his Bishops to guard against non-Christian religions gaining prominence in Europe. Clearly Serbia's Milosevic and Russia's Putin took that as license to kill. Few people seem to know anything about the Chechens, a civilization older than Russia, in which the Sufi Naqshbandi school originated, was brutalized by Russia for centuries. *Moshe Gammer, an Israeli, wrote of their sad plight for his doctorate.* Knowing some history could make us realize why Chechens today see violence as their only resort.

One more time, I should explain that I do not believe a *conscious* crusading thirst exists in Christendom, *except in nooks and crannies, like the Evangelists.* But the subconscious Crusading state of mind *does* exist, embedded from childhood, provoked by media from time to time. Searching for the truth, *very close to Christianity at the time*, I have seen growing evidence of it. New "meanings" to Nostradamus keep emerging, "predictions" surface from the Torah Code and Revelations by Christian scholars, not unlike what we know occurred in Christendom in the decades following the First Millennium, that led to hysteria and the early Crusades. Stories of tears shed by statues of the Virgin Mary move some of us often. Priests everywhere claim she is crying because Christ is not accepted universally as Son of God. In 1988, at the beautiful *Sacre Coeur* (Sacred Heart) Church in Paris, I was praying fervently for God's guidance, as many of us do wherever we might be. *I suddenly heard a clear message from the large wooden statue of Virgin Mary. My friend Marie rushed to me because she heard me start sobbing loudly. I refused to tell her what I had just heard.* But it was a very clear message, and it was not what priests were claiming. Years later, I told my Long Island friend Fr. Franco what happened. But I did not repeat the message. I will not repeat it here, either. I believe it was intended to help me preserve my own shaky faith.

In 1990/1, prior to the Bosnian holocaust, I was exploring into various religions again. I went to Thursday prayer meetings in Queens, New York, at the home of Conchita Keena who, as a small girl in the early 1960s, was the most famous of the little girls who swore they had visitations from Virgin Mary in Garabandar, Spain. My old school teacher Fr. Benac had introduced me to her. Books had been written, films made over the years about that Garabandar miracle,

though Conchita refuses to talk of it now. It was at her house that I met Fr. Franco and his sister Helen. We became good friends. *Later, they even provided me, without conditions, with a comfortable room on my occasional visits back to New York from Washington, when Muslims I knew made excuses.* These are caring Christians, like my old schoolteacher Fr. Benac who remained my friend over fifty years until he died about five years ago. Like many Muslims and many of other faiths, these are gentle people, born to a faith in which they believe firmly, know nothing about other faiths except what their priests/mullahs teach them. They have prejudices but most of them are not *actively* against other faiths. But that cannot be said of the rebel-rousers among the Christians and Jews today who make full use of the fact that Judeo-Christians rules the world. *What is buried deep within the psyche of TV evangelists who seem to think a smiling Christian God applauds them because they attack other faiths?* They make fortunes through contributions, live lavishly, have secret sexual liaisons with parishioners and prostitutes, sob repentance on TV when discovered, then start all over again. Today, these TV performers still win over millions of minds. Some, following Robert Schuller, hold classes to teach other preachers successful marketing methods.

Politically, the US, embarrassed in the past at being called "backward" and "provincial" by the Brits, have gone overboard to become "sophisticated" by rejecting the nation's founding principles and now ape not the best but only the worst of British characteristics. This tempts the Brits to cling on to those Machiavellian traits. The evangelical hysteria has also taken root in Europe through massive TV promotion. The two seemingly contradictory movements have been carefully merged through corporate media. *History is written by the victors. The history that the Tories wrote and its US sponsors glorify, puts a spin on their past ugly deeds as necessary evil.* The Machiavellian tactics that disgusted Jefferson seem to enthral Americans today, because media glamorizes them. *There are Britons of principles today who are ashamed of this past, irritated that so many Americans admire it. But now Americans find rationales to use these tactics themselves arguing that the other side is evil, Muslim, and on the warpath.*

In this book, I have *deliberately* focused upon the US's proletarian beginning and Britain's sleazy past to bring the extremists in both to understand that their present-day delusions of superiority have set their own societies in regression on all that was best in them. Centuries ago, the English, having ambitions but little natural wealth, developed great skills as con artists and pirates. Many British intellectuals who strongly disapproved of its colonial past, welcomed FDR's pressure on Churchill to abandon colonial excesses, abhor the pollution that Anglo-Americanism has wrought on their culture. *On its side, the US polluted its founding principles, with colonial adventures by embracing Churchill's "expertise" in neo-colonial exploitation that has increased and decreased since, but never ended.* In the 1960s, many hoped that both US and Britain would reject their corruption, and emerge *independently* to genuine New Values. The Reagan-Thatcher and now Bush-Blair policies have dashed those hopes. Britain's *unrealistic* hunger to imitate



America's living standard, surfaces with this alliance and has led periodically to an epidemic of bankruptcies

When the Bosnian holocaust began, I refused to believe that the West would watch the massacre every day on TV and not bring it to an end right away. Unlike the sheer decadence *even within the Vatican* that prevailed in the Christian Church until the Reformation, the contemporary Church had shown high ethical standards, but, to me, Bosnia was the acid test of what Christendom is today. After Bush Sr.'s promises during the 1991 Gulf War, that no invasion and conquest would go unpunished in the New World Order, how could this massacre and incessant rape of the unarmed Bosnians be allowed to go on indefinitely, with silly excuses? *It brought to mind the Zionist terrorism and genocide of the Palestinians to create Israel in 1948. Is this how that had started? Was the Christian West calmly going to let the Serbs do that in Bosnia?*

Then I learnt of the shocking involvement of top members of George Bush Sr.'s regime with Serbia, confirmed by no less an official than Ronald Reagan's Ambassador to Rumania who angrily disclosed this link as a great scandal at the start of the Bosnian holocaust. In a speech, later published under the title "Betrayal of America", former US Ambassador to Rumania David Funderburk said Mr. Bush's National Security Advisor Scowcroft and Secretary of State Eagleburger were shareholders in Henry Kissinger's huge business empire with its tentacles deeply ingrained in Serbia. Some senior men of integrity in the State Department during Bush Sr.'s era, resigned, stating that their conscience could no longer take US callous indifference towards the Bosnians. More resigned after Clinton somersaulted and followed the same policies of neglect as Bush. Unlike the Palestinians, these Bosnians Muslims identified sociologically with the West. Why did the US stand by while they were massacred, their children raped daily? How would Muslim extremists react to this outrage if it went on, I wondered? *I went unchecked for over three agonizing years. We saw it every day. After vacuous excuses ("quagmire" had become the favorite word of Bush and his team), Clinton's Defense Secretary Perry blurted out the truth for the first and perhaps only time in a live TV interview on April 3, 1994: "We cannot get involved in the war on the side of the Muslims".*

I had to do a deeper study of world history. In being so involved, I might also save my own sanity, avoid watching TV reports of daily Bosnian massacres. This is why I had made the big decision, moved from New York to Northern Virginia, minutes from the Library of Congress, the world's best reservoir of knowledge. I knew it would take a long time (even without knowing of future health problems). I would have to live on a very strict budget, with no socializing whatsoever.

The past decade of research have proved to me beyond any doubt that Muslims had been the victims even more than I had realized, not because of a superior moral code but mainly because Islam enjoined upon Muslims they must never fight against the Christians and Jews except in self-defence, while Jews and Christians were not under any such prohibition but rather taught that Islam was a false religion that must be put down by any means. This truth was driven home to

me time and time again in examining history, based entirely upon the works of non-Muslim historians and scholars. Most of these writers sometimes left pieces hanging or in the proverbial fine print to avoid becoming too explicit, as *that would displease their primary non-Muslim market too much*. At times, I had to laboriously piece the jigsaw together

Because that wretched September 11, 2001 attack came just three months after my book was published, there was not time or means for me to seriously promote my book as Binghamton U did not. After 9/11, I wrote to Binghamton University to stop selling whatever copies of that first printing they still had.

Portions from that first edition have been used by other Muslim writers and speakers, without permission or even the courtesy of mentioning the source from which they have taken the material. Sadly, today's Muslims (like many Asians and Americans today) do this often. They deny it is stealing and claim, they are "doing it for Islam"! *But if that were so, why not acknowledge the source? Is it Islamic not to do so?*

All my life, I have been strongly opposed to wars as barbaric, always argued that the US monstrous "defense" budget invites a combative foreign policy to justify its use. I have always argued that while violent outbursts by Palestinians (Muslims or Christians) and Muslims everywhere who resort to violence may bring temporary balm to the ongoing anguish, such violence only allows the adversaries to isolate and highlight each such violent act, and thereby wipe from public awareness the cause of this violence. They can do this as major media belongs to them. But having said that, should Muslim community leaders call these extremists "enemies of Islam"? Should non-Muslims call them "devils", and worse? I condemn their violent acts, but my conscience will not let me call them names. I have not lived for the past fifty years in a Middle East hell-hole in which they have lived and now die. What they do through their violent reactions is self-defeating, it kills innocents, but I will not become a holier-than-thou judge of their actions from any religious standpoint. *I have always argued (in this book as well) that Muslims of our times have a much greater need today to redirect their anger to improve themselves, shed some self-defeating traits, consolidate. By all means defend Muslim rights but direct your efforts fully to become unified. I channeled my own fury about Bosnia to research for this book because I believed that is a productive use of anger.*

But associating the Sept 11 attack with the teachings of Islam is clearly intended to put Muslims on the defensive, and it has. Terrified American Muslims who, more than anything, want to live and prosper in the US, jumped in to apologize. Their condemnation of terrorist acts is of course deserved. But apologize for Islam? Throughout the many dark chapters of genocide, racism, rape, torture in the "Dark Ages" of Christendom, did anyone ever seriously blame Christianity, the religion, for that? But Muslims today have responded to the bait, damning the Muslim extremists and indulging in detailed apologies for Islam, when today's terrorism is the result of exhausted patience, a human, irrational reaction by those who have suffered enormously over so many years. Remember, Palestinian Christians were

among the first "terrorists" led by George Habash thirty years ago. Do we ever assign Nazism to Christianity? What was done on Sept 11 had nothing to do with Islamic or Christian teachings. It was wild human reaction by some persons, who may have been Muslims, against unending injustice "You are either with us or against us" President Bush told Americans after Sept 11. Were his speechwriters aware but that is a Fascist theme taken from Vladimir Lenin, the founder of the Soviet Union? I believe it is possible to be with Mr. Bush on this issue, condemn the attack yet strongly disagree with the methods he has used since Sept 11 to end the terrorism and its dangers.

September 11, 2001 was a terrible tragedy. Those who lost loved ones were hit the hardest. I was hit in a unique way. After ten years of hard work, using up all my dwindling savings, I had to ask Binghamton to stop sales of my book. Because the Binghamton edition was put together in such a shoddy, cramped single volume, I had already commenced plans for a second edition in two volumes through another source. But I had to stop plans for a second edition at that time because digging into the past, no matter how truthfully, would only exacerbate the hysterical atmosphere that prevailed after September 11. I desperately needed money. But it became a matter of conscience.

How do we end the cycle of violence by Muslim, Christian and Jewish terrorists and the terrorism from some elements in the Bush hierarchy? First, we should ban the use of the word "civilized". It is not civilized to say "We are civilized." Instead, we should try harder to think in civilized terms. President Bush himself has defended American Muslims, and won zealous support of their leaders by inviting them to Idd functions at the White House. But, concurrently, the Bush regime has targeted all Muslims wildly. By keeping terrorism fears uppermost on American minds, Bush strategists have certainly made him popular as a Crusading figure and wiped out ugly memories of his 2000 election tactics. But is not public paranoia serving the terrorists?

How can extremists be stopped? By pounding away at Muslims as terrorists, killing thousands of innocents? That was the standard tactic of Zionist extremists even before 9/11. They love the present mood of condemning Islam. Don't examine the cause, just harp on the effect. It is a policy that has protected Zionist fanatics and their American partners since 1948. US media has made a fortune by ignoring the cause, even after Sept. 11, as it has done in every crisis of the past involving Muslims.

Common sense dictates that the first step towards seeking solutions should be to probe and analyze the cause. But truthfully examining the cause would point the finger immediately at media, at US political errors and at Israel's excesses. So the Bushies and media concentrate on emotional pains of 9/11. And, they shoot darts at Islam. Financially, and politically, it has been a goldmine. Fox became rich by using sex beyond "soft" pornography from the time Murdoch bought Fox. This soft-porn media king is aped by the other networks now. Now, post 9/11, Fox projects a Republican and "Christian" image, condemns Muslims incessantly. TV's

hypnotic power keeps the masses from questioning Fox's marriage of Pornography and Christian piety.

Courageous elements in the West have protested against the havoc inflicted by the US and the UK upon Afghanistan and Iraq. The bombing has reduced these countries to worse rubble than before, killed many thousands, made millions homeless in this past year. Has the fact that naïve American Muslims declared themselves for Bush confused the non-Muslims of goodwill about what the truth is? Blair's blind support for the Bush foreign policy also won Bush much support from American masses. It does even today though it is clear much of the evidence to invade Iraq was manufactured by Bush regime.

"Why do they hate us?" became media's shameless cry after Sept. 11. These "devils" who attacked on Sept 11, did so (said media and Bush) because they are jealous of US prosperity or just hate Christians and Jews. This argument banks on total public ignorance and there is that ignorance. The truth is nowhere in the world has there been more adulation for the US, than from the Muslim Middle East, despite the Palestinian issue. Asian Muslims have always been especially traumatized that their infatuation for the US has been so abused by the US in its obsession with Israel. The proclamation of "patriotism" by young American Muslims in recent TV commercials might seem pathetic and driven by fear, but they are clearly thrilled to be accepted by the US.

Only the innermost circles of the Bush regime know the truth. But is it possible that the Bush strategists became so complacent at winning the support of American Muslims in 2000 that they assumed (or were assured) that the entire Muslim world would follow American Muslims in supporting Mr. Bush whatever he did or did not do? Did Mr. Bush ignore the Middle East entirely after becoming president because of this? Did the Muslim extremists in the Middle East become especially furious at this neglect and launch into September 11 to get attention? Even if they had been working on plans for such an attack before, they could never have launched it if hopes of a peaceful Palestinian solution like those aroused in the last year of the Clinton presidency had not been abandoned altogether by Mr. Bush. All the plan had needed was for Israel to concede that Palestinians should get East Jerusalem back. Would the extremists have gone ahead with Sept 11 if there was serious dialogue even after Clinton left office?

Some critics of the Bush regime have long suggested that the Wag the Dog syndrome played a major part in the Bush strategy, i.e., to invite some crisis after the 2000 election to suppress the fallout from the ugly tactics used to get Bush elected. We do know now that US secret services had evidence much before September 11, of such an attack yet nothing was done about it. Perhaps the Bush regime expected another blundering attempt like that in 1993. But if the fanatical elements in the Bush regime sought to spread blind hate for Muslims, it certainly worked. But they would not have knowingly risked such a devastating carnage as 9/11. There are still whispers also that an Israeli offshoot was responsible for 9/11, and chose a Jewish holiday when most Jews would not be at work at the Twin Towers. But it seems unlikely.



It is utterly nauseating to hear Mr. Bush now voice outrage that Saddam used chemical weapons against Iraqi and Iranian civilians. The truth is that Saddam Hussein was a special friend of the Reagan-Bush team in the 1980s, with a "Favored Nation" status. He was given the latest lethal arms freely by the West to fight the Iraqis. When Iraq used chemical weapons in the 1980s, its elements *provided by the West*, and it was *proven* by European doctors to have been used upon Iranian civilians, the US vetoed any condemnation of Iraq at the UN. In my 1986 book *The Rape of a Noble Ideology*, (p.450) I warned strongly against this shameless US protection of Saddam's use of chemical weapons and that one day the US may pay for it.

The Afghan Taliban as well as Osama bin Laden were also all wooed by the Reaganites; their fighters were provided massive supplies of arms and training to fight the Soviets. *With its usual hypnotic power, US corporate media (not for the first time) has instantly switched the American public perception of these and other "saints" of yesterday into "devils" now.* In the 1950s, media ardently applied the McCarthy blacklist, then in the 1960s, just as instantly claimed to despise it. Until the law banned cigarette advertising on TV in the 1970s, TV promoted cigarettes passionately, even had game show hosts chain-smoking on the screen (and movie actors like Reagan promoting the habit). *But once profits from its advertising were banned, no one has been a more fiery critic of smoking than corporate TV. Such is the magic power of TV brainwash.*

Some of us had hoped that Paddy Ashdown would become Britain's Prime Minister in the 1990s and that British media had at least a dozen Robert Fisks and its Parliament a dozen Tony Benns (the latter used up his vast inheritance to reject the peerage he inherited). On a personal level, I had hoped for better things from Blair, a fellow-Wodehouse addict, just as I hoped Clinton's love of progressive jazz had made him spiritual! Doesn't Blair realize that while his Bush infatuation may help Britain economically, the damage it does to British character, and to Labour's reputation as the Party with a conscience, is enormous? Don't other Labour leaders realize this?

The incisive Jefferson, one of the very rare Founders born of British upper-middle class, angrily warned against the yearning for social climbing towards Britain's upper classes. This yearning was led by Alexander Hamilton, the illegitimate son of Rachael, a West Indian "woman of low morals", brought to the US by a Christian missionary. Sadly, the reasons for this yearning and who hungers for it the most, is a lesson the US has never learnt.

It is *not* elitist to condemn such values. Shaw's *My Fair Lady* illustrates the fact that superior values may be embraced by one member of a family and not another, at any level of society. Eliza Doolittle is a lady even before she learns to talk like one, *because she always knew the difference is not money.* Her father, Alfred Doolittle can *never* be upper-class, because, like many who are born very rich, his values, even after he is rich, will always be pedestrian. Millions with superior values live in hovels today, while the "Alfies" live in palatial luxury, buying symbols of culture.

For the records, I should repeat that there are those four critical first steps necessary to bring the US in line with its founding principles: (1) restructuring of its tax laws, to remove the current cancerous incentive to make obscene profits and indulge in monopolistic holds over huge segments of the US economy (2) make political advertising illegal; politicians seeking office must be given adequate opportunities to communicate their views to the public through debates, and allocated time and space to communicate their views (3) bring Military spending back at least as low as it was in Carter's era (4) Nuclear arsenals must be made extinct in the US, Israel, as well as other countries.

We all know that Democracy is not the perfect system. We also know it is better than others. *But we cannot afford to pollute it blatantly and still expect it to function correctly.* Think about what the current pollution of obscene advertising spending to elect a president does, especially when the billions are spent to enrich corporate media. The combined power of that advertising on broadcast media has created, in recent years, public perceptions that would be laughable if they were not so tragic. Bush and Kerry, the current contenders, both are from rich families, both with privileged schooling. Bush avoided endangering his own life, never went to the frontlines to fight, but strongly considers wars and vast military spending essential. *For this he is considered a greater patriot.* Kerry went to War, was wounded several times, saved lives, returned, then expressed his opposition to that War. Who is the greater patriot? Most Americans still say "Bush". All of Bush's policies are blatantly for the very rich, and often uncaring of the poor. Kerry has consistently sought to improve the lot of the poor and the middle-income. Who do most Americans, even today, like for President? Bush. The truth is in this TV age, the masses want to "identify" even with the person they elect to the most powerful office. They want an "average Joe", very mediocre. Kelly's problem is, he is too intelligent, well informed and of proven integrity. That is dull! The same syndrome applied to Carter compared to Reagan. The deliberate remodeling of the public mind to glorify mediocrity began seriously with Nixon-Agnew, was gleefully built upon by subsequent Republican hopefuls, as I have discussed in detail in my 1986 book. In this book, I have repeated some of what one primary source, Nixon aide Joe McGinnis, wrote after he became fed up with Nixon's chicanery and exposed it in *The Selling of the President*.

The US desire to be respected as "No.1" because of its military might is *un-American*. I see this perhaps because I have a unique advantage over Americans born in the US. I was *not* conditioned to believe Corporate media from infancy. From 1965 onwards, I admired some of US media when it took up a Cause, but I knew how it could distort. *I saw the image it had created of India in American minds.* I was convinced, from my first exposure to it, that while US TV can be entertaining, its monopolistic hold on generating news, with profits as its primary aim, is a gruesome cancer on the US. I have another advantage today over most Americans, my many years in multinationals, with ad agencies and media, all of which convinced me of the extreme need for reforms in these "image" professions. In the "Epilogue" to this book, I have spelt out what I mean as I have in previous

writing. What is worse is that from the Reagan era onwards, the US is in the "Cowboy Politics" state of mind. Bomb those who don't fall in line. Has it worked? Even Reagan had to admit it did not, after his military attacks in Lebanon led to suicide bombing directed at the US embassy. "No one has found a foolproof defense...when attackers are willing to give their own lives," he admitted in February 1984. But reacting with our supreme military excesses has won applause for Bush, from those at the lower end of the IQ scale, from media, and from Judeo-Christian fanatics. The civilizing values the US founders sought to establish are the first victims of this Wild West policy.

Today, Bush and other Republican politicians scream patriotic messages, allocate \$500 million for military *officially* to wage wars, but *always* avoided fighting on the front themselves. But John Kerry went to war in Vietnam, was wounded three times saving others, returned home laden with bravery medals. *Only then did he protest against that War.* I am strongly against violence except in genuine self-defense. But someone who went to War because it was his patriotic duty to do so and did a marvelous job of it, waited till he was back home to protest it, that is a man I respect. If he wins, I hope he is still the man of integrity he was when he thrilled us with his speech about Vietnam to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1971. *In today's climate, I hope he has not been pressured to support Judeo-Christian fanatics to serve political ends.*

This book will not be readily accepted in my lifetime, even by many Muslims. So I have tried to explain things as clearly as I can for a later age. There will be every attempt made by detractors to avoid discussions of the main issues; there will be mudslinging but most of all, media will use its most lethal weapon of all: *Censorship by silence, the cold treatment, giving no print or air time for honest review or discussion.* The all-powerful Cartel that owns media in "the free world" has done that before. *Media in the "free world" today consists almost entirely of conglomerates who have bought up all others and compete mainly for profits. But there is also a Judeo-Christian bond that emerges to fight any "outsider" who raises questions.* Corporate Media learnt early that the masses want to be told what to think. Today, more than ever, the masses are trained to watch, read and parrot media's version of events and opinions. *Concurrently, corporate media repeats ad nauseum that the American public is the best informed in the world!*

I truly wish I could have avoided my criticism of some contemporary Muslim community leaders and Muslim governments, the serious shortcomings of the populist *mullahs*, the epidemic in our times of gossiping, jealousy and what the Qur'an (Sura 49) calls "*eating the flesh of your dead brother*", i.e. backbiting. Muslims are the ones I could have banked on for this book, if I had been more diplomatic. But there is not time for that. Truth is paramount in what may be my swan song.

I have been asked often why I am so "obsessed" with this project, reduced to poverty pursuing it single-handedly and writing what will annoy all sides. I could instead have been making lots of money in the corporate world as I did, at the start.

*The fact is what I am writing is not for today's Muslims but in defense of humankind and its values.*

I have decided I must touch upon one period of my life, the so-called "best" youth years, about which I have been very secretive, but only because it is all still painful and involves others. But I am criticizing the very powerful here, who have shown they can play very rough. So rather than have someone "dig it up" twist the fact in any way, I should explain the matter briefly, sequentially.

I was dubbed a "happy-go-lucky genius" by Fr. Bonet, my high school's Jesuit principal, himself an Oxford Wrangler. Even my "bunking" from sheer boredom was tolerated. I was set to go to Oxford to study English literature and psychology, then to Lincoln's Inn for the Bar. This was my chosen path from childhood. There were those who wanted to block my path, but I was determined not to let them do so. But then my father fell very ill, could not attend office, my older brother (8 years older) who worked with him, also took ill, did not leave his room for many months. So I had to give up studies at age eighteen, attend family business, income tax and sales tax tribunals cases, rush home when needed look after my brother, at night. Many people have had to make such sacrifices, of course, so there was nothing so unusual about it. But what followed was very unusual. I am still hazy about the time span, but after my brother's illness of some six months, mine was a lot more prolonged. I know my parents suffered through it with me. This is as far as I will go into the details of what I have recalled since, much of it under hypnosis. When I emerged from it all, I was twenty-five. The very healthy, strong boy I had been was now, in effect, a vegetable.

Gradually I learnt to present an acceptable outward appearance. It took time. But my hunger to resume my studies was uppermost, though I knew that would be very limited now. I filled early morning college "terms" while working at an ad agency, graduated with Honors in English Lit. and Psychology at age 29 from Bombay University, was allowed to start on my thesis for my PhD but I found it impossible to combine executive work and studies. My mental composure gradually improved, except for sleepless nights spent in self pity. I became Senior Account Executive within a year of joining today's Ogilvy & Mather. The next year (1961) I was the first Indian to become Marketing Manager of Cadbury-Fry, met Paul Cadbury, patriarch of the Cadbury family, on a world tour. I was told he informed his UK Board he wanted me raised to the Board of Directors (India) within two years. But I could no longer endure India. I resigned, came to the US as a grad student to USC, Jan 1965. I found US current values amusing and irritating. But in my state of mind, the US was better suited for me than England, despite my Anglophilia (alive and well at the time). Thomas Jefferson soon became my personal hero.

Two years later, I was very fortunate to have Bills raised in the Senate as well as the House, to make me a permanent resident. I was allowed to work, therefore, even before I got my Green Card. I have lived since, as an executive with top multinationals and ad agencies, and then as a writer, in Hollywood, New York, San Francisco Bay, suburbs of Washington DC, in the Midwest (Ann Arbor),



for brief periods in Europe and Asia and traveled in many lands. The executive positions I have enjoyed would be most unusual for even a US-born, much less an Indian, especially in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Once I began to earn enough, I sought out a New York psychiatrist, reputedly the best, specializing in hypnotic therapy. It took over five years, had its own unexpected traumas, aside from the huge costs (I had full medical coverage as an executive but did not want this treatment to be known to my corporate employers or anyone, so I paid for it). Just unburdening myself in these emotional sessions under hypnosis with Dr. Milton Kline, whom the CIA, I heard later, used as an expert on Mind Control (Long story, provable). In the meanwhile, I tried to make up for lost time by dating as many different girls as I could, for a time. I never married. In recent years, my financial plight after the "blacklist" and commitment to my writing, have made marriage impractical. This has left a deep hole in my life. I love children, they know it and respond instantly.

But even as I received accolades, salary increases, and job offers, I continued to talk, then write, about the difference between *legitimate* practices in advertising and marketing and what I saw as corporate excesses, its control over politicians and TV's impact on the subconscious. I was loyal to my employers, but very concerned that corporate media over-glamorized Big Business. I realized most reporters were well-meaning but merely mouthed what they were told. My job clashed constantly with my deep-thinking, often all through the night. I worried about the harm some products did and how we twisted facts in advertising copy and laughed about it. Should I get out of it all? The acid test came when, as Manager of the New Product team at Richardson-Vicks in 1970, I pressed a skeptical R&D to conduct clinical tests on the effectiveness of a douche in a small disposable size. I believed this product would be more effective than the scented talcum sprays we all marketed. It worked. As this would clearly become a major new product category, I was applauded, confidentially promised a separate division as VP within months. I was pleased but worried that all this would raise me to a position and salary so tempting that I might never leave corporate life. I told friends I had visions of my tombstone one day with the epitaph: "*Here lies the man who rocked civilization by coming up with the first Disposable Douche*". It was an attitude that I later realized aroused resentment among my peers, even some friends. Not only was I moving up the ladder too fast, but I treated what *they* craved to get, casually.

Personal tragedies struck again. My mother, enormously loving but with what, in the US, is called the "Jewish mother" syndrome, died suddenly, just one month before I was to visit her after more than seven years. Even my letter, written after a year, apparently reached an hour after she died. The guilt was unbearable. I resigned from Richardson-Vicks (part of P&G now) where I was clearly headed for the top, visited my father in India, wandered several months across Europe, returned to join Clorox, (recently forced into divorce from P&G by anti-trust laws) even renewed my passion for tennis at which, and at table tennis, I had, as a teenybopper and teenager, won titles. But messing with consumer minds had

become too hard to take. I took a cut in salary to join *The Washington Post* during Watergate. But after Nixon's resignation, I realized the paper was too cozy with Israel and Big Business. So I got involved in other "causes", researched at the Library of Congress for a book after resigning from the Post (*The Rape of A Noble Ideology*, published 1986). Later, short of money, I agreed with headhunters that I should return to corporate life, at least briefly. *But now we found I was blacklisted from corporations. Over several months, some 22 companies separately made enthusiastic job overtures, then suddenly changed their minds. Five actually retracted firm offers.* Corporate friends obtained telephone conversation tapes of blatant lies being circulated about me. I could have sued for millions, started to do so but then, gave up the effort in disgust after I found from another lawyer that my top corporate lawyer, oozing sympathy, was in fact undermining my case to protect corporations from my action.

Thereafter, I devoted myself to writing exclusively, became more involved in "causes" than ever. In the midst of it, my ruptured disc (evolving from a bad fall in a tennis tournament in 1974) led to emergency surgery in Virginia in 1982, so badly done I was bedridden frequently until 1988 when my friend Dr. Marie Egu, insisted we go to Paris (where she had an apartment) to be treated by Dr. Thierry Marchand. He put me back on my feet. But in between, and since, there were tragedies and coincidences galore that convinced me that a Higher Power does direct us to paths we may never have chosen ourselves. Delusions of grandeur? All I have had is a lot of pain! But spending over ten years to research and write this book about Muslim history is not something I had ever dreamt I would undertake, as a supremely confident fun-loving "freethinker" in my early teens, "*who thanked the gods, whatever they may be, for my unconquerable soul*".

Even as I write this, I feel foolish at making these candid revelations for the first time. But I am advised that in the present McCarthy-like climate, it is a wise precaution to reveal all, as the best protection against lies, distortions, possible government action without trial. All that I have stated here is provable, much of it with documents and tapes, though I would much rather seal family matters once again, and take them to my grave. But I want to ensure that this written account of history survives, for a future generation, which may understand it better and carry what I advocate to the next stage.

I believed at least some of those who created the American Experiment were genuine idealists. They believed that, with proper wherewithal, Americans, mostly proletarian, could create a society more just and eventually more refined than aristocratic societies. They compromised to win support, they excluded Native Americans and "coloreds" from this ideal, but their concept of the true American Dream was not obsession with money and status-seeking. They examined religion and concluded, wisely, that no religious doctrine must be imposed upon the American people.

Today, the US has some astounding achievements to its credit, especially in material and technological terms, and proved that a consortium of ethnics and races can be very productive. Importantly, inspired by the idealism of some of its

founders, there have been many Americans over the years, who have clung to those founding principles: a farmer, a housewife, a reporter, a president. We have lost very good men and women prematurely, some because they were idealists. *There should have been more thorough investigations about how some died, quite recently.*

I firmly believe that one awful cancer upon the American psyche is the belief that we are the greatest *as we are and not as we can be*. Arguing against my claim in my 1975 piece that this was a terrible cancer upon the US, Ben Bradlee, Executive Editor of *The Washington Post* (who I truly liked and admired) wrote the following to me in a letter dated Dec 22, 1975: "Dear Aslam, I have read your piece and I have no quibble with it... [but] I think, I would give it a reasonably low priority". Other editors, one by one, also rejected the piece. No editor admitted (*but some well-known writers did*) that what I was targeting was a goldmine to media with its appeal strongest to the lowest IQs in society. *But those were the ones in greatest need for self-improvement, I argued.* One well-known columnist joked that I would never be a successful writer with idealism like that.

Commercial media has of course made flattery of its customers a vital part of its policy. But how much of it should be allowed without protests? *True patriotism requires that someone should force Americans to recognize that self-glorification has led to dangerous group-narcissism.* Perhaps foolishly, I have undertaken this unpleasant, thankless task for the past thirty-odd years. In rejecting Jimmy Carter for Reagan, I argued in my 1986 book we have *consciously* rejected the nations' founding values. American founders yearned to spread civilized values across the world. Instead, refined values have been rejected right here in the US, and our influence upon the world is enforced through Military agents of death and through Corporate TV, of values that must make the founders whirl in their graves. We speak incessantly of our "freedom". How can we have "freedom and choice" under the hypnotic power of TV owned by corporations whose primary duty is to make profits for their shareholders? There *are* individuals in the media game even today who are concerned. They are rare, and are certainly not of the class of Edward R. Murrow, regardless of the largesse that political advertising provides to media, would have condemned the fact that with an advertising budget (*so far*) over \$150,000,000 for his 2004 campaign, George Bush's commercials may persuade the masses through brainwash where his policies may not.

The US rules the world with more money and military power than any society in history. But its *unintended* message, for future generations, may well be that Democracy leads to Mediocrity, *at best*, and that claims to higher values of a society of Have-nots ancestry last only until they become the Haves, that the human species is not evolving to more civilized values but remains the Great Beast from one generation to the next, that insisting (as many Americans do) the Judeo-Christian faith is the only route to salvation, trivializes its own richness. In this age of cloning, there is an epidemic of agnosticism and atheism. Very many of those who do not believe, are willing, pragmatically, to let Judeo-Christian extremists rule. *It is most profitable to do so.*

Europe embraced US wealth but not Wilson's "Fourteen Points" after WWI. If they had, we might have a *different world today*. But Lord Balfour proclaimed at the time "The four Great Powers are committed to Zionism and Zionism, *be it right or wrong, good or bad, and is rooted in age-old tradition, in present needs and future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land*". That told the world plainly that justice towards those of other faiths is not important in the "free world". Until recently, the Judeo-Christian world was *not* as blunt as it was in the Balfour era and the shameless chauvinism of Rev Josiah Strong. But in the Bush era, we seem to be returning to that thinking.

The EU public has finally become angry enough to state in a recent survey that today, *Israel is the greatest obstacle to world peace*. Will that thinking last? Briefly, during the FDR era, the extreme poverty under colonial harness was considered contemptible. But that changed from the 1950s onwards. Johnson, Carter and to a degree, Clinton sought a return to compassion. But today, the "Third World" is resented in the US as competing for the American Dollar in the world market with its *unfair cheap prices, when it is the giant conglomerates that dictate terms*. Today, on an average 30,000 children die from hunger and malnutrition every day around the world. How do we sleep nights, professing concern and simultaneously create stringent rules and controls of international trade and traffic to ensure that the rich nations do not become too charitable to the less fortunate? Prince Charles frightened the corporate world and rightwing politicians by pointing to the huge chasm between rich and poor countries *that has become so enormous after WW2*. The UN, under Kofi Annan, set a measure of what the rich nations could easily spare to bring this gap from widening.

*This yardstick said rich nations should donate 0.7 per cent of their GNP towards poor nations' survival. Some, such as Japan, the Scandinavian countries, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Iran, generously allocate more than this. The British and the US, permanent members of the Security Council, consistently gave less than 0.3 per cent. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan quoted by The Washington Post (May 22, 2000) said "Nearly half the world's population live on less than \$2 a day, and about 1.2 billion people... make do on \$1 a day. This extreme poverty is an affront to our common humanity".*

We claimed in the 1960s to have become aware of how serious the world's pollution and poverty really is. But then we embraced Reagan's "me-first" concept. The US is not only responsible today for some 35 per cent of the world's pollution but is the chief obstacle to enforcing laws against polluters. Look it up. And Congress rebuffed Clinton each time he asked that we pay up to the UN all the billions we owed the UN to the full. We paid a part. But Clinton, the politician, also signed on September 16, 1996, the new Espionage Act which ordered the *CIA to treat national economic interests as synonymous with security*. There are today many protests from many countries about Anglo-American covert activities in the corporate world.

This jingoism is not what the American founders had in mind as the role of



the new nation. What the founders considered obscene was that the feudal lords had all the wealth while hundreds of millions of peasants starved. *Today the US celebrates this gross imbalance under the Republican "Trickle-Down Theory".* Democracy itself was seen by the Nature Philosophers of the 17th and 18th century as the answer, using the Universal Mind, the collective wisdom of the masses who might lack excellence *individually* but would collectively provide humanity with wise leadership. *But the monopolistic hold of the electronic media over the masses does not permit that Universal Mind to operate any longer.* Once questions of conscience and duty are numbed with rationales of me-first and fanaticism, selfishness is easy to accept. "Greed is good" has become, at least subconsciously, the axiom from the Reagan regime onwards. Under feudalism, the very rich had many generations and the means to develop culture and refinement that they could claim made them worthy of a superior status. *Some of the old upper class genuinely practiced what came to be known in the West, learning from Eastern values, as chivalry and noblesse oblige. Not today. Now money is the measure of all things.*

Corporate mergers and acquisitions in the past twenty years have re-created in the US the Age of the Monopolists and a disdain for laws that even corporate raiders never dreamt could be possible in the Third Millennium. In my 1986 book *The Rape of a Noble Ideology* (now out of print) I warned (p.350) that Big Business, afraid during the Carter era that their years of excesses were soon coming to an end, openly sought to grab what they could while they had the chance. In *Fortune* magazine (May 8, 1978 issue) A.F. Ehbar wrote that European giant corporations (his clients) were seeking to enter the US for the few years of bonanza left before the freeloading was brought to an end. He said Senator Kennedy was already warning US legislature that 300 giant mergers were being sought that should not be allowed. "As one of Ira Harris' European clients explained to him, 'We've got five or ten years of capitalism left [in Europe] and you've [in the US] got fifteen or twenty. We want to be in on those last ten years'". Then Reagan's outer husk was used to perfection with soap-opera style scripts to repack corporate excesses as holy. It is because of this supreme achievement in his name, that Ronald Reagan is looked upon today as only slightly less than divine.

If ever anyone were to apply the old "intent to deceive" rules to current advertising, most commercials of today would be disqualified. Corporate chicanery gets to a new low each year while the FTC, FDA and FCC are led by the wishes of the incumbent regime. Until the 1970s, "ethical" (prescription) products could not be advertised directly to consumers. Now, not only are billions of dollars spent on such advertising but a new gimmick is used by major pharmaceutical, clearly aimed to protect the manufacturer and the doctor. Prescription products with strong possible side effects are presented in happy, carefree commercials; legally, side effects must be mentioned; these are done by a Voice Over and we are told to ask our doctor. *What the public may not realize is that if the patient asks the doctor about a product, a good deal of the blame for using the product is passed on to the*

*patient, in any law suit.* Even products like those for genetic herpes (*incurable and easily contagious*) are advertised using a fresh lovely girl in outdoor settings, with only a Voice Over stating the dangers.

There is a glimmer of hope as "history" on TV in the past two years does occasionally present the Muslim version of some event in history as the truth. Cynics argue it took Sept 11 and stark fear to achieve this. But on most subjects, TV and movie "biographies" and "history" continue their traditional propaganda. New technological advances raise grave fears about the future. In Bush's 2000 campaign, the "subliminal" technique (banned worldwide) was used once (*in it, the viewer does not consciously see some frames but they register upon the subconscious*). One Bush aide admitted it was done but insisted it happened accidentally. In *Forest Gump*, we saw how "editing" can transfer human figures from one era to another. Even without this new trick, TV and movie "histories" deliberately confuse fantasy with the truth by "reconstruction" of events with actors playing roles interspersed by actual footage of reality, so the trusting viewer cannot tell "history" from propaganda.

What will happen when these new techniques get into common use? In addition to Hollywood's identifiable moguls today, there are new giants less well known but most powerful, such as the "Regency" giant, owned by Aron Milshawn, former Mossad (Israeli Secret Service) spy, arms dealer, now leading movie maker and financier set up in Hollywood and Israel. Like many others of his ilk, he has unlimited funds to produce mainstream films with some propaganda, and extreme propaganda "Left Behind" types.

Today in the era of Enron, Halliburton, Andersen, and dozens more, and an ever-growing list of corrupt corporations and officials, of industry czars extracting billions of dollars from collapsing corporations, the periodic "defense contractors" scandals (scarcely reported now), no one thinks seriously about bringing Capitalism under control. Even the Scandinavian countries that adhered more closely to the US founding ideal before Olof Palme was killed, have now gradually fallen in line in the commercial age of satellite TV. *"The proposal of any new law or regulation which comes from this order [business interests] ought always to be listened to with great precaution... It comes from an order of men whose interest is never the same as that of the public, who have generally an interest to deceive and oppress the public and who accordingly have, upon many occasions, both deceived and oppressed it."* Who said that? None other than Adam Smith, whom Big Business is so fond of claiming as its prophet! (Marquis W. Childes and Douglas Carter in *Ethics in a Business Society* Harper and Row, NY 1954 p. 39).<sup>1</sup>

Today, American Muslims, now mostly in Republican garb, try harder than ever to be accepted in the US. That is understandable. It would be fine if this led to real friendship with "the people of the Book" but over the centuries, it has proven one-sided. Muslim theologians have also tried, by accepting some Judeo-Christian beliefs to get Islam accepted. For instance, it is the Judeo-Christian belief that the world was created 7,000 years ago. But this goes with their belief that the world

was created for Judeo-Christianity. There is nothing in the Qur'an that says the world was created only 7,000 years ago. Yet Muslim theologians say so because "the people of the Book" say so.

As of this writing, what is becoming a gruesome possibility, hard to ignore, is that some desperate plans may be underway, with the present Bush regime in trouble so close to November, to accelerate a Final Battle. Who is killing Iraqis, but *not* foreign soldiers? Who are these lunatic Muslim terrorists who launched the murderous attack in Madrid on March 11 that killed 190 people, then set another last week that was discovered in time? The Spanish public was most strongly against the War in Iraq. In elections last month, they overthrew their rightwing government that was allied with Bush and Blair in that War. In this battle with the police on April 2, several Muslim terrorist were killed, evidence is reported by US media to have been found that (1) they were planning yet another attack with similar ammunition as that used in the March 11 havoc, (2) all the ringleaders of that carnage are now killed, except one. *Who are these Muslim terrorists who target non-Muslims like the Spanish who do not want to kill Muslims?* If you study "radical" reports this is what one gathers:

1. The US (with Blair in tow, of course) has reconciled with Saudi leaders, whom some months back they even accused of supporting Wahhabi terrorists who planned and conducted 9/11. The Saudi royalty was created by the US and UK after WWI; it survives today with Western military support, say some radical Muslim press. Frightened by this accusation, the Saudis promised to break ranks with OPEC to boost oil production and help Bush in his re-election bid, and use all its resources to find and punish radicals.

2. The US strategists are uncomfortable with the growing rapport between Sunnis and Shias. According to non-Western reports, Israeli and US secret services are involved in many of the attacks, even the one on Ashura on Shias gathered in mosques in Iraq.

3. Some of the oil sheikhs do not want too much power going to Shias in Iraq and would prefer more power-sharing with Sunni Kurds in Iraq. This agrees with the thinking of some US strategists. Crisis, even early rumblings of a civil war in Iraq would silence those who clamor for early withdrawal of US forces.

What is curious is that no one seems to have even considered the possibility of the hand of Algeria's extreme rightwing government, next door to Spain, in the disturbances in Spain. In 1997, *London Observer's* two remarkable investigative journalists John Sweeney and Leonard Doyle had reported (November 9, 1997) that the flurry of killings and bombs in Europe instantly blamed by governments and media in the West on Muslim "fundamentalists" were actually conducted by Algerian military junta, in order to blame Algerian Muslims who had handily won the first round of elections before the military junta, with support from the US government and others, aborted the elections, leading to riots and killings in Algeria. Sweeney and Doyle reported that a *certain Youssef-Joseph*, an Algerian Secret Service Agent for 14 years, was now speaking out about his government while he sought political asylum as he would

undoubtedly be killed if he returned to Algeria. Another guilt-stricken Algerian Secret Service Agent had been confessing to French authorities on the quiet. In their report, Sweeney and Doyle said "*the bombs, which outraged Paris in 1995 — blamed on Muslim fanatics — were the handiwork of the Algerian secret police. They were part of a sophisticated black propaganda 'Psy-ops' war aimed at galvanizing French public opinion against the Islamists... The relentless massacres in Algeria are the work of secret police and army death squads.*" (see p. 716 of this edition)

If Islam is the last revealed religion and is meant to be universal, *should not Muslim theologians be delving into commonality with other religions? Early Muslims were seeking such linkage when they researched and revived Greek civilization.* After all, Islamic sources says that there were over 100,000 messengers sent by God to all parts of the world. Taoism, Buddhism, Hinduism began before there was a written script in these faiths. *Were illustrated figures used to explain doctrines to an illiterate populace and did these idols become entrenched into the religion itself as deities?* The depth of some philosophies is so profound that they must be studied by those who follow "revealed" ideologies.

My belief that Islam is a true religion stems from my *personal* experience that initially came as a shock to me. It was not dictated by any social pressures. In fact, emotionally, I was set against Islam. Having lived, as I have most of my adult life, in the West, *rejecting Islam would have won enormous dividend in my career, relief from the jealousy and competitiveness that Muslims must face from other Muslims.* But deep down, I suppose I always know that, at its root, shorn of its baggage, Islam is genuine.

Perhaps because my knowledge of Islamic languages is so poor, I have learnt to concentrate on the compulsory teachings of Islam. The Qur'an was revealed to convert extremely backward people who lived in drunkenness, sexual depravity, and every excess. *We seem to forget this often.* We also seem to forget that it is "repetitive" because the message was revealed and enunciated over a span of almost twenty-five years.

I always read the Qur'an as *early Arabs would have.* That explains to me why it is so worded. And, that keeps me focused on the forest, not the trees. In my Christian kindergarten, we drew God with a white beard, sitting on a throne, while angels with wings sat on white clouds playing on harps. Then, 30 years ago, I was bowled over on reading a unique concept of the Creator, in a letter written 1400 years ago by the Prophet's son-in-law Aly. It is a tragic sign of our times that Shia scholars to whom I have shown it, admit they have seen "something like this" often as Aly expressed this viewpoint many times even in his sermons. But they were clearly not moved as I was, or even as non-Muslims to whom I have shown it, perhaps because they have read those sermons often. It needs to be read slowly, digested, meditated upon, many, many times, to grasp the essence:



God is not like any object that the human mind can conceive. No attributes can be ascribed to Him that bear the least resemblance to any quality which human minds know from their material existence...[But] piety requires we truly know God... and perfect awareness of God is to deny all attributes to Him. He who applies an attribute to God believes that attribute to be God, and he who so believes regards God as two or part of one. He who asks where God is, assimilates Him with some object. God is the creator, not because He Himself was created... He has no physical relation to matter, time, and space. God is Omniscient because knowledge is His Essence. He is loving because love is His Essence. He is forgiving because forgiveness is His Essence. It is not because these are attributes apart from His Essence.<sup>6</sup>

I am always struck by different meanings attached to the same words in the Qur'an. The word *Husn*, for instance, is used in the Qur'an for beauty as well as for goodness. Ergo, Beauty without Goodness is not true Beauty. But above all else, the word *Huqq* in the Qur'an has had the greatest impact on me. It is used in the Qur'an for God, for Truth, for Justice, for the Righteous Path. Ergo, they are all One, *Indivisible*. A critical corollary in this context is *Shirk*, or never allowing anything, animate or inanimate, to rise, even conceptually, to the level of the Creator. Even love of family can be *Shirk* if that love goes against His directives or our love for the Creator.

I believe that all this is revealed in the very sound of the word *Huqq*. Pronounced correctly in Arabic, (not easy at first) it is a sound from deep in the thorax. I believe it is a sound not unlike the first sound we make at birth, and the last sound we make before we die...

This is the core of my faith, my religion, under One Universal God.

April 30, 2004

Aslam Munjee

## Background and Introduction (August 2000)

When my book *The Rape of a Noble Ideology* came out in 1986, my horror at seeing the innumerable proofing errors (Gore Vidal chastised me for this, saying this had probably kept it from becoming a best-seller) took a very long time to subside. I had made many sacrifices over many years to research and write that book; but then because I was once again bedridden with back pains, (the legacy of poorly performed disc surgery), with a very tight production schedule, I let Robin Blood, the Australian proofreader in Singapore, have the last word. I was devastated at seeing the book appear in the form it did. After a while, though, encouraged by praise of luminaries like Gore Vidal and eminent academics like Prof. Johan Galtung, I commenced work on a second, updated edition. The fact that the issues covered in that book were, in my opinion, critical for the US and the world, and some of what I had predicted had already come true (even the stock-market crash) and none of the contentions proven false, added to my determination. In 1996, the remarkable Oliver Stone, pre-eminent Hollywood producer, director, writer, became interested and tried to get a second, updated edition brought out through publishers he knew. But even he could not. That hurt, of course. But not as much as it might have done if I was not already deeply immersed in research for the present book and had decided it was the most important thing I would ever do in my life.

I had started research for this present book desultorily in 1989, full-time after 1992, so it has taken over nine years to research and write it. Fears of censorship commenced once again when five publishers, reputed to be "open-minded", rejected the outline I sent of this present book. Viking Press, the publisher of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*, was one. I entreated them to recognize that if "freedom of expression" is important for Rushdie, it should also be for someone of a different viewpoint. No, they did not agree. Fortunately, I found the best possible publisher for a book such as this, in the Institute of Global Cultural Studies at the State University of New York, Binghamton, an academic publisher who was willing to let me air my "controversial" viewpoint, provided it was backed by evidence and reason. And provided, as it turned out, I did all the editing and the proofing myself.

I have persisted with this project despite major hardships, fiscal and otherwise, in this period, with pain, even traumas in my associations with many Muslims, including almost all close relations. That was the ultimate irony. To keep going, I have had to remind myself, always, what the concept of *Huqq* means, in Islam. The word *Huqq* is used various times in the Qur'an for God, for truth, justice, the righteous path. That means that God is synonymous with Truth, Justice, the Righteous Path. When in doubt, Truth and Justice are paramount, *whether they benefit us or not*. It is critical to set the records straight about Islam, the injustices inflicted upon Muslims over the centuries, but also about the injuries as a result upon the psyche of contemporary Muslims.

I have not lived a pure Muslim life, even in my formative years in Bombay, India. I grew up in a pseudo-British environment, attended Christian schools, always passionately fond of Western music and art, English literature, excelled at tennis and other sports. I had no Muslim friends at all, but I did have miraculous experiences in my teens, which flabbergasted me, then a fierce "freethinker." They pointed plainly to the legitimacy of Islam, yet I chose *consciously* to distance myself from Islam and Muslims after painful experiences thrust upon me by some "religious" Muslims (not my parents) in my early years; even my *willingness* to see the Muslim viewpoint, or study Islam without prejudice and hang-ups, did not commence until ten years *after* I came to live in the US thirty-five years ago. In a very sad period in my life, I met some Muslims who I saw, at the time, to be very sincere and who became, for a while, warm friends from whom I learnt the basics of Islam in sessions alongside their American wives. In the face of the never-ending prejudices and distortions of Islam in media and around me and seeing current political events so blatantly distorted in corporate media reporting (which I had always condemned, all through my many years in the image-making professions), the question that gnawed away at me was this: *If current events are being so blatantly distorted, what of the past? What really happened then?* I had grown very fond of some of the white-robed priests who had taught me history in school. Some, like Fr. Francis Benac (S.J.) who died just three years ago, became lifelong friends. But as I matured it became increasingly clear that the "history" they had taught me was pure, unadulterated propaganda. Yet I have Catholic priests as friends even today. I believe good souls come with a variety of religious labels; some even become misguided bigots from having one viewpoint drilled into them from infancy, too scared to open their minds to alternatives.

I know now that my occasional research into truth in history during the many years that I was an executive in major multinationals and advertising agencies, was, at best, superficial. Then, I did spend several years in the 1970s researching American history for my 1986 book. But once the Bosnian holocaust began, my research into European history became full-time. I moved from New York in 1992/3 to Northern Virginia, minutes from Washington DC and the Library of Congress. This enabled me to spend most days at the LOC all through these years (using up all my savings for the second time in my life). Concurrently I tried to do what little I could on projects to save the remaining Bosnians alongside similarly motivated

Americans who too were appalled at what we Americans were *permitting* to happen with the most hypocritical, superficial excuses. An athlete all of my life, and given to exercise always, my health suffered a lot now from a series of traumas (Bosnian and personal) leading to three surgeries in about five years, most recently a quintuple open-heart surgery in July 1998.

I know that this book may not do much good to me personally. In fact it could lead to "extreme prejudice" physically. I have always had love for Jesus and respect for the core of Christianity and Judaism. But that is not important to Western thinking today. In the Clinton era, the power of political Zionism rules the world more than ever. Even world leaders fear Zionist wrath. What chance does an individual have to escape that wrath, especially one with no support group of any kind, whom the Christian Right extremists will also target?

Will this book do any good? That depends entirely upon the spirit in which it is read. Hundreds of books have been written on the "Crusades" presenting the Christian viewpoint, scores have been written by Muslims, presenting the Muslim viewpoint. The former rule just about everywhere today, even in some Muslim societies and of course at all levels of society in the West through the lethal power of visual media whereas the Muslim efforts are generally dismissed as well-meant but weak, anecdotal apologies offered by them. My objective through this tiny drop in the ocean is not to provoke extremists but to undertake the Herculean task of proving that truth in history is very different from what popular history books and corporate media have taught Western and most Eastern schools, colleges, TV and movie audiences. How does one prove that? By daring to use *responsible non-Muslim historians and scholars exclusively as sources*. It is a huge challenge because the truth is often buried deep even in some of these works and one must weave one's way around commercial twists and self-serving rationales even these writers must use to please the primary Western market. I have tried my best to faithfully provide as many verbatim quotes from these writers as possible. I have had to work single-handedly throughout. I must apologize in advance if I have made some inadvertent error. This challenge of using non-Muslim sources exclusively (aside from the Qur'an, of course) is a major handicap in another way: Many of the facts reported by Muslim historians are not covered by non-Muslim sources, and these, therefore, cannot be reported here. But I still believe that this handicap is necessary this time to serve the higher cause of credibility.

A word about the sources used in this book. I stumbled upon Sir Arthur Evans's book in the most amazing way at the Library of Congress, and that got me going. He, like some other writers of the 19th century (e.g., Draper, Buckles, Lea) was a genuine scholar. Just about all of them were prejudiced against Islam, naturally, from what they had been taught of the religion; but they believed that *all* that they found to be the truth must be reported. It was an era when genuine scholars abhorred lies to serve political, religious or commercial ends. Fortunately, we still have some of that rare ilk with us today — Karen Armstrong, Noel Malcolm, Ivo Banac, for instance. And Jews, risking all for truth and justice (and punished a lot for doing so), rare souls like Ahad Ha'am, Moshe Menuhin (father of the violinist),



linguist Noam Chomsky, Alfred Lilliantal, Judah Magnes, Norman Bendwich, Felicia Langer, Israel Shahak.

I hope young Muslims read this book. They must take up the cudgel now, conduct more research and *commence* to eradicate the deep-seated inferiority complex that has inflicted Muslims for centuries, with its many cancerous ramifications, which include (a) rampant jealousies *within* Muslim societies towards those more talented (b) the tendency among many of the afflicted to blindly imitate everything Western while the *same* cancer manifests itself in others through opposite symptoms, i.e., refusal to learn *useful* developments from what are now more advanced Western societies, with the obstinate, emotional belief that what one's own society does not know is not worth knowing (c) hatred between Muslim schools of thought, encouraged by some Muslim leaders and enemies of Islam.

It is my fervent hope that this book is read with an open mind by non-Muslims of principles and integrity, so that they may lead the way to make the Western world recognize the grave consequences for us all, if the "tradition" of blatant injustices, distortions, killings, which have been perpetuated in the name of religion through the centuries, are not ended. I fervently hope, also, that the criticism of Muslims in this work is taken by Muslims in the spirit in which it is offered.

I know my patriotism, as an American, will be questioned. It was by some when my 1986 book came out, but fortunately, we have laws which permit freedom of expression and a few Americans do share my belief that the highest level of patriotism is to be willing to criticize one's own country, face hostility, in order to seek to better it and its citizens' values. Waving the flag, claiming "we are the greatest" as we are, not as we can be, is not patriotism, it is self-serving self-indulgence, feeds the cancer of jingoism, encourages exploiters to be elected, makes fortunes for media and perpetuates mediocrity in its citizenry.

One of several reasons why I have always admired Hillary Rodham Clinton is because I know, in a small way, the emotional pangs of switching political alignment on principle. Not only have I always had Republican friends, from my USC days, but shortly thereafter, I was sponsored by a private bill raised in the Senate by Republican Senator George Murphy in 1966 (Bill No. 3284) urging the Secretary of State to reduce the immigrant quota "by one" to make me a permanent resident! I was then made, in effect, an honorary member of the Young Republicans, invited to functions, including one to meet Ronald Reagan running for Governor of California at the time (George Murphy was his sponsor in politics). It was not easy, when I understood American politics and its past better and *had* to choose conviction over superficial gratitude. I certainly did not gain materially from this. The blacklist to which I was victim from the mid 1970s to the 1980s may have had nothing to do with this, as I had already lost a good deal of powerful goodwill after I joined *The Washington Post* during Watergate, with such conviction that I took a cut in salary to do so. I believe that, today, many in the Democratic Party pander to, or are Israel-led, and therefore "have not really become Americans" (by Woodrow Wilson's excellent definition). So I am a registered Independent.

I hope I get the opportunity to debate this book in open forum, but of course

that is most unlikely. Corporate media knows that, with its monopolistic hold on mass communication, the best way to kill any effort to disseminate facts it finds distasteful, is to *ignore* the effort. There *are* exceptions, but, mostly, those who rule Western corporate media bestow the right of "freedom of expression" upon themselves. Look what they have done even to illustrious Jews over the years for being critics of Israel.

The American constitution provides freedom of religion as a fundamental right. That is the very core of the American founders' aspirations, just as France's *sincere* revolutionaries proclaimed the Rights of Man and freedom of thought for all humankind. The United Nations formally embraced the Rights of Man at its formation. But it is one thing for its members to pay lip service to a concept, quite another to practice its provisions. It was the Jeffersonian dream that with proper education and individual freedoms, America's proletariat society could become the most civilized of all. *It is not there yet.* It sets a good example in some ways but *not* in others; religious bigotry, for instance, rides high, even proudly, in Europe and the US. There is that peculiar belief that by denigrating the religion of others, one wins a place in heaven even if one does not live a decent life. Americans today have conveniently forgotten that Washington himself announced that the US *is not* founded as a Christian country. In fact one of the US's first treaties was with Algeria in 1796 in which the US government pointedly stated: "As the Government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion; as it has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion, or tranquility of Musslemen [sic]; and as the said States never have entered into any war or act of hostility against any Mehomitan [sic] nation, it is declared by the parties, that *no pretext arising from religious opinions shall ever produce an interruption of the harmony existing between the two countries*" (Treaties, Conventions, International Acts, Protocols and Agreement between the United States of America and Other Powers, Vol. 2).

Today, having suffered what they have, most tortured Bosnian and Kosovar Muslims are willing, with or without Western pressure, to divorce themselves from their Muslim heritage and from Muslim countries. Who can blame them? But Bosnia and Kosovo *have* pricked Western consciences a little, though clearly not enough, as is evidenced from the fact that the West refused to grant complete independence to Bosnia and Kosovo despite all they have suffered and despite their distinct religious, ethnic and *emotional* difference from the other Slavs; on the other hand, the Western Alliance and its media jumped in to demand independence for the tiny sub-island of Christian East Timor from Indonesia simply because they are now Christians. Here the West was not concerned about "interfering in the internal affairs" of a country, and it has continued feeding billions in aid to Russia, while weakly calling "unacceptable" Russia's all-out massacre of Chechnya's civilian population, a shameless breach of the 1998 treaty and all civilized norms.

The expansion of NATO, a military organization, to include more and more of white Judeo-Christian Europe is a frightening prospect. Eventually will NATO become an armed extension of OSCE? Even include Russia and its satellites?

*Against whom?* Muslims should be grateful that NATO *did* decide to take *some* action, finally, to save Muslim victims from total annihilation by Christian Serbia. But now, to win back Serbian and Russian favor, NATO and UN seem determined to woo the Serbs, even let them profit from their atrocities in Kosovo as they *did* profit from their atrocities in Bosnia. The obvious, civilized solution is to give Kosovo *back* to its long-suffering Albanian population. But they will not.

Exactly what do extremists plan to do to invite the Second Coming in the early years of the Third Millennium which, even by the current Christian calendar, begins in 2001, not 2000? Only time will tell.

August, 2000

Aslam Munjee

## Prologue

Around 150 A.D., the Visigoths, a north European tribe, ruled Spain. They, like most of Europe's converts to Christianity were Christians who believed in One God and they believed, unlike Roman Catholics, that Jesus was *from* God but *not* Son of God

The Franks, who were the only major Roman Catholic tribe<sup>1</sup>, were encouraged by the Pope to invade Spain. The Franks conquered Spain and it now had Catholic rulers. Rome then ordered Jews to be sent to Spain. This forced migration of Jews was to continue sporadically over the years from then on. By early 8th century, 90,000 Jews had reportedly been forcibly baptized and brought to Spain.<sup>2</sup> A new Catholic law now said all those baptized *had* to observe all the Church's teachings, or else...

Roderic, a Catholic King, now sat on the throne in Spain. Florinda, daughter of Count Julian, governor of Cadet, a Goth-conquered colony in North Africa still in Spanish hands, was in Toledo, Spain for her education. She was reportedly very beautiful. King Roderic raped her. Western historians like Prof. John Draper believe he *did*. Informed of the rape, Count Julian rushed to Spain and brought her back with him to North Africa, to save her from further abuse. Then he appealed to Emir Musa, the local Muslim governor, "prevailing upon him to attempt the conquest of that country [Spain] and offering that he himself could take the lead [of the Muslim forces]" says Prof. John Draper of New York University, the eminent 19th century scholar in his uniquely honest *History of the Intellectual Development of Europe* (two vols., Longmans, Green & Co, London, 1863).<sup>3</sup>

The Muslim world had, by this time, spread from Persia and India to all of Western Asia and across the northern coast of Africa. Islam was only a hundred years old at this time; the ardor of this new message from God, along with the enormous success it had won caused its followers to be extremely enthusiastic about righting wrongs everywhere. Emir Musa informed Caliph Al Walid in Damascus of King Roderic's rape of Count Julian's daughter, of the Count's plea for help, and about the plight of the Jews in Spain and the need to help them. The Caliph gave permission to Musa to proceed. Emir Musa sent his lieutenant Tarik to lead the initial forces. Tarik crossed the Rock at the boundary of Spain,



(subsequently named Jab al-Tarik, later corrupted to Gibraltar) in 711 AD. "In the battle that ensued a part of Roderic's troops, together with the Archbishop of Toledo...deserted to the Arabs; the rest were panic-stricken. In the rout, Roderic himself was drowned in the waters of Guadalquivir."<sup>13</sup>

Emir Musa now himself joined Tarik and the Muslim forces proceeded northwards, "As the towns successfully fell, they [Muslims] left them in charge of the Jews, to whose revenge the conquest was partly due and who could be thoroughly trusted; nor did they pause in their march until they had passed the French frontier and reached the Rhone" reports Prof. Draper.<sup>14</sup>

In the meanwhile, Caliph Al Walid had been succeeded by Caliph Suleiman, who now sent an envoy ordering Emir Musa to stop further advances. He reportedly cited Qur'anic directives not to wage war and conquer without cause. Musa argued that there still was cause. A furious Caliph Suleiman ordered Musa to be arrested and brought to Damascus. Musa was tried; he argued that he had been forced to fight on because he was engaged by hostile Christian forces from France. But he was heavily fined and then imprisoned in Damascus. By the time he was freed, he was penniless and spent the rest of his life in rags.<sup>15</sup>

As to Gibbon's claim that Charles Martel stopped Muslims conquering all of Europe, Dr. Karen Armstrong (*Holy Wars*) writes, "This is a distorted and exaggerated view. The Sultan was not continuing the *jihād* and had no intention of conquering Europe. He had been invited into Christendom [in northern Spain] by Eudo, Duke of Aquitaine, who wanted his help against Charles Martel. Muslim historians scarcely mention 'The Battle of Poitiers' [which popular Christian legend claims was Martel's decisive battle which stopped the Muslims]...They [Muslims] had no designs on Europe, which they saw as an undesirable place, with a dreadful climate and primitive, backward inhabitants who were on a level with the black barbarians of Africa."<sup>16</sup>

Spain was different. In those days, it was not "Europe" to Mediterranean societies. It was only a handful of miles from North Africa. Conquerors from both continents had ruled the Mediterranean over past centuries. Now Muslims were to rule southern and central Spain for seven hundred years, during which time they often had treaty arrangements and close friendships with neighboring Christian rulers, fought alongside some against others. When Abderrahman came to Spain and made Cordova ("Cordoba" in Spanish) the seat of his government, he "strengthened his power by an alliance with Charlemagne...the Khalifs [sic] of Cordoba distinguished themselves as patrons of learning, and set an example of refinement strongly contrasting with the condition of the native European princes. Cordoba, under their administration, at its highest point of prosperity, boasted of more than two hundred thousand houses, and more than a million of inhabitants. After sunset, a man might walk through it in a straight line for ten miles by the light of the public lamps. Seven hundred years after this time, there was not so much as one public lamp in London. Its [Cordoba's] streets were solidly paved. In Paris, subsequently, whoever stepped over his threshold on a rainy day stepped up

to his ankles in mud...These [Muslim] sovereigns might well look down with supercilious contempt on the dwellings of the rulers of German, France and England, which were scarce better than stables - chimneyless, windowless, and with a hole in the roof for the smoke to escape, like the wigwags of certain Indians. The Spanish Mohammedans [sic] had brought with them all the luxuries and prodigalities of Asia...The Khalif Alhakem's [library] was so large that the catalogue alone filled forty volumes. He had also apartments for the transcribing, binding and ornamenting of books. A taste for calligraphy and the possession of splendidly-illuminated manuscripts seems to have anticipated in the Khalifs, both in Asia and Spain, the taste for statuary and paintings among the later popes of Rome." wrote Prof. John Draper.<sup>17</sup>

Dr. Victor Robinson says (in *The Story of Medicine*) "Europe was darkened at sunset; Cordoba [under Muslim rule] had public lamps; Europe was dirty, Cordoba built a thousand baths; Europe was covered with vermin, Cordoba changed its undergarments daily; Europe's monks could not read the baptismal service, Cordoba's teachers created a library of Alexandrian dimensions."<sup>18</sup>

A renowned academic, honored at Oxford University (a unique honor for an Anglo-American in the 19th century) Prof. John Draper reveals himself in his writing to be courageous and contemptuous of deceit. It angers him that Muslims had been denied their rightful credit in the civilizing process of Europe. For instance, he writes "To these Saracens we are indebted for many of our personal comforts. Religiously cleanly, it was not possible for them to clothe, according to the fashion of the natives of Europe, in a garment unchanged till it dropped to pieces of itself, a loathsome mass of vermin, stench and rags... They taught us the use of the oft-changed and oft-washed under-garment of linen and cotton, which still passes among ladies under its old Arabic name... the Spanish Khalifs, emulating the example of their Asiatic compeers, and in this strongly contrasting with the popes of Rome, were not only the patrons but the cultivators of human learning... thus the luxury, the taste, and above all, the chivalrous gallantry and elegant courtesies of Moorish society found their way from Granada and Cordoba to Provence and Languedoc. The French, the German, and English nobles imbibed the Arab admiration of the horse... the pasties were tilts and tournaments... The refined society of Cordoba prided itself on its politeness... the Khalifs of the West carried out the precepts of Ali, the fourth successor of Mohammed, in the patronage of literature... to every mosque was attached a public school in which the children of the poor were taught to read and write...for those in easier circumstances, there were academies... in Cordoba, Granada and other great cities, there were universities frequently under the superintendence of Jews; the Mohammedan maxim being that the real learning of a man is of more important than any particular religion he may entertain. In this they followed the example of the Asiatic khalif Haroun Al Rashid, who actually conferred the superintendence of his schools on John Masue, a Nestorian Christian. The Mohammedan liberality was in striking contrast with the intolerance of Europe. Indeed it may be doubted whether...any European nation is sufficiently advanced [even now] to follow such an example. In the [Muslim]

universities, the professors of polite literature gave lectures upon Arabic classical works; others taught rhetoric, or composition or mathematics or astronomy or other sciences. From these institutions many of the practices observed in our colleges were derived. They held Commencements as we do, at which poems were read and orations delivered in presence of the public. They had also, in addition to these schools of general learning, professional ones, particularly for medicine... They also had lexicons of Greek, Latin, Hebrew; and cyclopedias such as the Historical Dictionary of Sciences of Mohammed Ibn Abdallah, of Granada... Their poetical productions embraced all the modern minor forms — satires, odes, elegies, etc. Even among the Spanish [i.e., Muslim] women, there was not a few who... achieved a reputation in these compositions; and some of them were daughters of Khalifs. And this is the more interesting to us, since it was from the Provencal poetry, the direct descendant of these efforts, that European literature arose... history was held in no less esteem. Every khalif had his own historian... statistics were cultivated... the scope of their literary labors offers a subject well worthy of meditation; it contrasts with the contemporary ignorance of Europe... not one of the purely mathematical, or mixed, or practical sciences was omitted... Out of a list too long for detailed quotation I may recall a few names: Assamh, who wrote on topography and statistics... Avicenna, the great physician and philosopher who died AD 1037. To him is imputed the discovery of spots on the sun, the unity of the souls of mankind... Abu Othman wrote on zoology; Al Beruni on gems... Rhazes, Al Abbas, and Al Beithar on botany... Ibn Zoar an authority in Moorish pharmacy. Pharmacopoeias were published by the schools, improvement on the old ones of the Nestorians; to them may be traced the introduction of many Arabic words, such as sirup[syrup], julep, elixir... our dictionaries tell that such is the origin of admiral, alcohol, algebra, chemise, cotton, and hundreds of other words. The Saracens commenced the application of chemistry, both to the theory and practice of medicine, in the explanation of the functions of the human body and in the cure of its diseases. Nor was their surgery behind their medicine... in operations on females in which considerations of delicacy intervened; the services of properly instructed women were secured. How different was all this from the state of things in Europe: the Christian peasant, fever-stricken or overtaken by accident, tied to the nearest saint-shrine and expected a miracle; the Spanish Moor relied on the prescription or lancet of his physician, or the bandage or knife of his surgeon... in mathematics, the Arabians acknowledged their indebtedness to two sources, Greek and Indian but they greatly improved on both. The Asiatic Khalifs had made exertions to procure translations of Euclid, Apollonius, Archimedes and other Greek geometers..."

"As in the case of so many other things, the Arab impress is upon it [Arithmetic]; our word cipher, and its derivatives, ciphering etc. [are derived from Arabic]. Mohammed Ben Musa... who made the great improvement of substituting sines for chords in trigonometry... he lived in the ninth century; before the end of the tenth, it was in common use among the [Muslim] African and Spanish mathematicians... the study of algebra was intently cultivated among the Arabs,

who gave it the name it bears... Ben Musa ...was the inventor of the common method of solving quadratic equations... Al-maimon had also ascertained the size of the earth from the measurement of a degree on the shore of the Red Sea ...While the latter [Constantinople and Rome] were asserting, in all its absurdity, the flatness of the earth, the Spanish Moors were teaching geography in their common schools from globes," writes Prof. Draper "I have to deplore the systematic manner in which the literature of Europe has contrived to put out of sight our scientific obligations to the Mohammedans. Surely they cannot be much longer hidden. Injustice founded on religious rancor and national conceit cannot be perpetuated forever... The Arab has left his intellectual impress on Europe, as, before long, Christendom will have to confess" he adds (italics added).<sup>9</sup>

But Christendom has not confessed, even a hundred and twenty years after Prof. Draper wrote that. Intellectuals of the nineteenth century would never have even dreamt what was to follow politically and sociologically; how "pop" historians of the corporate state would establish fantasies from the Dark Ages and their own as "mainstream" facts; how movie and television czars, with great technological skills but limited education and knowledge otherwise, would implant twisted ideas into the thinking processes of the masses around the world, and how, with like-minded politicians and clerics at their respective helms, this Power Cartel would league, with each passing generation, truth buried deeper and deeper in the cobwebs of time.

The Renaissance saw Christian Europe take and improve on Muslim discoveries, but the Church had demanded, as a price for its new leniency towards secular learning, that no Muslim discovery or innovation be acknowledged; so Christian Europe now "re-discovered" what Muslims had discovered. Muslim discoveries in science, geography, medicine, often centuries before the Christian world, were never attributed to Muslims. At least some who distorted facts of history or claimed "Christian authorship" did so knowingly, convinced that when it comes to religious issues in particular "the end justifies the means." In fairness, however, it must be stated that the majority of those responsible for daily, even hourly distortions, do so from habit, with vague knowledge heavily buttressed in ignorance, secure in the belief that what they propound is in agreement with mainstream beliefs, serves employer interests and therefore personal gain. Twisting facts has become almost routine for media today. In fact, the ability to artfully twist facts has become the true measure of today's professionalism in many endeavors.

With the enormous power of media, over recent decades, especially "entertainment" visual media, repetitive doses of distortions have led to the most extreme form of religious bigotry and fanaticism in the West and therefore to a great many injustices around the world, culminating in the incredible acceptance of the Bosnian holocaust, through an almost genetic refusal by the Western world to believe, despite all the evidence, that the unarmed Muslims, the obvious victims, should be either permitted arms or saved by direct intervention. Real help, however, had been denied for over nearly three years of hourly, daily, weekly massacre,



until more than 250,000 were killed, 55,000 women and children raped, incalculable injured. Bosnia-Herzegovina, which had become a unique example of civilized harmony between different religions, has been brutally and systematically crushed. Why? In the four years before the Dayton Accord and the signing of the Paris Treaty in 1995, and in the years since, in the trillions of words used daily by politicians and media to explain why the "major powers" could not get too involved in the "quagmire", no one had the honesty to mention that the real reason was buried deep within Western psyche: the Bosnians being raped and butchered were Muslims and those raping and killing were Christians. The fact that *something* concrete is being done now (even though it is grudging and riddled with hidden agendas) allows one to hope that fanaticism is at least *not irreparably* buried into the very core of the Western psyche, despite Kosovo, and despite Chechnya...

There has been an incredible reversal of roles in recent centuries between the Muslim world and what is now known as the "Judeo-Christian world." Steadily the latter has become very rich, militarily dominant, with far better secular education and incessantly calls itself "civilized", the World's Leader, the "First World." Steadily, generation after generation, the Muslim world has been defeated, pulverized until it now exists in mass poverty and illiteracy, psychologically crushed, home of the "barbarians", the "terrorists", often at war with itself.

Today, the Judeo-Christian world often says that it rules because God rewards those who follow His true religion. A few centuries ago, the Muslim world could — *probably did* — say that too. Today, scholars generally estimate that Jesus Christ was born between 4 B.C. and 6 B.C.; the Second Millennium of the Christian era ended therefore between 1994 and 1996. But the Western masses and their televangelists generally ignore such scholarship. So the hysteria, which prevailed towards the end of the First Millennium with the expectation of the Second Coming and led to the First Crusade of 1095, may be repeated as the year 2000 A.D. passes.

And if that hysteria is set ablaze, it will now be in a world saturated with nuclear, chemical and germ agents of death.

The Muslim world may not be fully aware of the dangers posed by Western extremists seeking to provoke the Second Coming but it is increasingly aware especially after Bosnia, Kosovo, Chechnya, now Iraq that one after another, Muslim countries continue to suffer major tragedies under circumstances which suggest that, to many in the West, the only good, practicing Muslim is a dead Muslim. The world may be headed, therefore, for a *man-made* Armageddon in which one side has enormous military advantage. Is that enough? It should not be complacent in this superiority. The other side has far fewer but *enough* weapons and it has *many more adherents who do not fear death for their cause*. Throughout recorded history, more lives have been lost in the name of religion than in any other cause. Our times are the most dangerous of all because of the weapons available today — the lethal weapons to brainwash the mind *and* the very many others to destroy the body.

"The last Crusader was Pope Pius II in 1464" reports Karen Armstrong, a former Catholic nun, now a prominent British religious scholar and TV

commentator, in her excellent 1988 book *Holy Wars*.<sup>10</sup> In his 1987 book *The Cross & The Crescent*, BBC's Billings wrote "Fifty years ago, crusading which began with the preaching of the First Crusade in 1095, was said to have come to an end in 1396 or, at the latest in 1444. Thirty years ago, Sir Stephen Runciman ended his three-volume history of the Crusades in 1464. Now there is one study, which ends in 1560 and another, which concludes in 1571. *This book is not the only one to be published this year, which takes the terminal date forward to 1798*"<sup>11</sup>

It is significant that the date of the "last Crusade" keeps getting moved forward, *but is never brought too close to an author's "civilized" times*. The simple fact is that if those who are honest dig deep to examine causes of the crisis that exist in our world today between the Christian world (now hand-in-hand with the Jewish world) versus the Muslim world, we would find that, *at least* at the sub-conscious level, *the Crusades have never ended*.

Once we accept this ugly fact, things begin to fall into place. There are no "quagmires" to hide behind. Some of us have suffered greatly from being identified with this unpopular contention. But if the Crusading fanaticism is to end permanently before a man-made holocaust "in the name of religion" ends life on earth, *all* of the past must be re-examined honestly, unflinchingly by people of all faiths. The truth *can* set us free if we *truly* embrace it.





## Chapter 1

# In the Beginning

While the span of time that humans have existed may be in dispute between the religious and secular scholars, no one can dispute the fact that it is in less than the last 5000 years that we generally focus for the meaning of life because *most* "revealed religions" deciphered so far span even less than that. It was in this tiny breadth of time that Confucius, Buddha, Zarathustra, Mani, Abraham, the Hebrew prophets, followed by Jesus and Muhammad, came into the world. There were ancient icons like Mithra, the Persian and Vedic icon, who had followers even in Europe, *whose birth to a virgin had been celebrated on December 25 for centuries even in much of Europe.* Jesus was born about 4-6 B.C. in Bethlehem, Palestine. He is believed to have been 33 years on earth, yet almost all that the four books chosen to form the New Testament deal mainly with just his last three years.

It is widely believed today that the Jewish tribes were the first to believe in One God. But this is of course not true. Even from what little we do know of earlier history we know that there were civilizations that were monotheistic. In the early years, errors in communication (and embellishments) from one generation to another were common, as the written word was unknown and then written evidence was lost or destroyed. There was, too, the tendency to seek physical icons and physical manifestations of worship in line with other societies of their time, so the monotheist societies soon reverted to various forms of idolatry and polytheism. Over 3,000 years ago, in Persia, Zarathustra (or Zoroaster), clearly preached monotheism although he reportedly said that the Evil One had equal power. Many centuries before Jesus came Mithra; shortly after Jesus came Mani, also from Persia; his esoteric teachings of God and creation were to have a profound effect on Eastern and Western Europe of later centuries and on Far East civilizations as well. Emerging from India, the essence of Gautama Buddha's teachings, more mystical than the world of the time could quite understand, were clearly monotheistic. The core of the magnificent, ancient Hindu philosophy, shorn of the mythological figures (probably introduced as allegorical aids to teachers) is also monotheistic. *But one of the earliest teachers given far less recognition than he deserves, is Pharaoh*

*Amenhotep IV of Egypt.* He was born about 1352 B.C., became Pharaoh at the young age of twelve and died (was most likely killed) before he was thirty. He ordered that all of his vast kingdom in Asia and Africa must discard their 2500 deities and believe in just One God. Thankfully, at least fragmentary evidence of his teaching have survived the perils of time and the efforts of high priests of Egyptian mythology he banished but who returned to power with his death, under the child King "Tut". They expunged almost all evidence of his life and work. Akhenaton's new capital was crushed. It is sad that subtle attempts are made by some writers today to denigrate him, and depict him as ugly, a fanatic who harmed Egypt's economy and culture in seeking to end Egypt's ancient polytheism.

The evidence, which has survived, shows that Pharaoh Amenhotep IV believed in one God he called Aton, who he said resided in or beyond the sun. Aton and sun-god Ra were known to the Egyptians but not at all as Akhenaton now preached. Amenhotep had changed his own name to Akhenaton ("Aton is satisfied"), and proclaimed that Aton, the one true God, should be worshipped at sunrise and sunset. Aton was good and kind, our Father, not the vengeful terror that the priests claimed the gods to be if they were disobeyed. Akhenaton preached that all living things, beasts and birds and flowers, worshipped Aton in their own way. He prohibited graven images of Aton, banished the priests and the temples in which they lived in luxury. "He spoke of God as formless, a kind of divine essence pervading space, and his theory is remarkable not only on account of nobility, but also by reason of its scientific accuracy... wars and vulgar conquest were considered to be utterly repugnant to Aton... Some of Akhenaton's subjects tested the sincerity of the king's beliefs by rebelling against him. Syria was taken by a tribe from Asia Minor called the Hittites, and Palestine was invaded by the Hebrews; but Akhenaton, although loath to lose these lands, refused to win them back by force."<sup>1</sup>

## (2)

The conquest of Palestine (part of Akhenaton's empire) by the Hebrews and of Syria by the Hittites was only possible because Akhenaton hated wars. He lived before the Psalms of the Old Testament were written, and he apparently spent much of his time in meditation and in composing poetry ("psalms") himself, only a few examples of which survive. Lord Kenneth Clark in his BBC-TV series *Civilisation* of the early 1970s, excellent though markedly Anglo-Saxon in viewpoint, referred to the fascinating word-for-word similarities in one or more of the surviving psalms written by Akhenaton, and one which appeared later in the Old Testament. Clark mentioned this in his TV series, but it cannot be found in the book version.

With Akhenaton's death, the priests and the old polytheism returned with a vengeance under Tutankhamen (Tut), the gold-anointed favorite of the West and Akhenaton's son or nephew or son-in-law. "Akhenaton was denounced as a villain and heretic; even his mummy was not spared" (*An Outline History of the World*, H.A. Davies, Oxford, 1937).<sup>2</sup> In fact Akhenaton was later to be portrayed as

deformed and ugly. His wife, Nephritis, whom he had raised to a status equal to himself, and who, with his mother Yei seem to have been intelligent, independent-minded, were ignored until Nephritis' great beauty was discovered in a statue in 1912; thereafter, she became the symbol of Egyptian beauty. Western awe and respect for Egyptian civilization is usually centered on cultural discoveries in the tombs, Nephritis' beauty and the gold that was discovered in Tutankhamen's tomb. Western historians prefer to dismiss Akhenaton as "deformed" and a "misguided fanatic." Every derogatory gossip of his times is given importance by many historians, who, evidently, would rather he is denigrated than recognized as one of the earliest known preachers of monotheism. Some do pay grudging respect. "How much Akhenaton understood we cannot say, but he had certainly bounded forward in his views and symbolism to a position, which we cannot logically improve upon at the present day. Not a rag of superstition or of falsity can be found clinging to this new worship" writes Flinders Petrie (*History of Egypt*, three vols., trans. by Griffith, Methuen, London).<sup>3</sup> "He was the first human being to understand rightly the meaning of divinity" writes Arthur Weigall, more generously (*Life and Times of Akhenaton*, Butterworth, London).<sup>4</sup>

Egypt's priests rushed to power after removing Egypt's prophet-pharaoh. They systematically crushed all vestiges of his life and teachings, restored Egypt to worship its 2500 deities led by the centuries-old Trinity: Osiris, the man-god who rose from the dead, his wife Isis and their son Horus. This Trinity was worshipped all over the Middle East when Paul commenced his mission to spread Christianity.

Siddhartha Gautama (later the Buddha) lived in India around 560 B.C. Until the age of twenty-nine he lived the life of a dissolute young aristocrat. Then he suddenly changed, leaving his life of worldly splendor, even his family (reportedly on the very day of his child's first birthday). He exchanged his rich clothes with a beggar, lived among the hills of Bengal, India, fasting constantly to the point of exhaustion. After one long session of meditation under a Bo tree, he emerged to preach the Right Path. Many disciples came but few could endure, over time, his demands that they discard materialism completely. Self-discipline was the essence in his message; the rejection of selfish cravings of the senses, personal ambitions and materialism. The human soul passes through reincarnations until it is pure enough to attain Nirvana, he is reported to have said. In time, Gautama announced he was now the Buddha (the enlightened one), and prescribed an Eightfold Plan to the Right Path: Right Views (Truth), Right Aspirations, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Rapture. His teachings were verbal (though notes are said to have been made on leaves) and discourses with his students and disciples with nature as the background seem to have been in a milieu not unlike that which Socrates would use in Athens about a century later. There were to be no temples and no priests, only deep meditation as he taught it. Gautama died about 480 A.D.

There is purity of thought and deed prescribed in Buddhism, which was tarnished periodically, especially after some Buddhists became rich, acquired vast



worldly possessions. But its disciples usually commanded respect, even those who were rulers. Ashoka (264-227 B.C.) became one of the greatest rulers in Indian history. His vast dominions extended from Afghanistan to Madras. He invaded a small territory once, but was horrified at the cruelty of war, and never indulged in it again, preferring to use religion as a weapon for conquests. He founded hospitals, public gardens, encouraged the use of herbal medicine, the education of women. Buddhism was soon to spread to Tibet, Burma, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Thailand and then to China and Japan.

In ancient China, the philosophical teachings of Lao-tse and Confucius prevailed. Buddhism merged well with these teachings. Significantly, Taoism (the teachings of Lao-tse) also emphasized the Right Path to Eternal Glory. While the writings of Mani, the Persian prophet, were destroyed, his message is known to have been in tune not only with Zarathustra (Zoroaster) and Jesus (*both of whom he proclaimed were true prophets*) but with these Eastern prophets as well.

Mani (or Manes or Manichaeus) was born about 216 A.D., in Babylonia (now Iraq), of Persian stock, related to the Parthian royal family through his mother. He is said to have had visions of angel "Twin" who directed him to preach the true religion which prophets before him (including Buddha, Zoroaster and Jesus) had brought into the world but whose followers had misunderstood or distorted their teachings. His was an esoteric message, proclaiming that this world is a fusion of spirit and matter, of good and evil. All mankind are one, but fanaticism had crept into teachings which claimed one people were superior and chosen. Manichaeism was Gnostic, it said salvation came from special knowledge and that to imbibe that knowledge, prayer, fasting, almsgiving and purity of mind and body were essential. Existence comprised of three stages, the past when spirit and matter were separate, the current state when the two are fused and the future when the spirit will be freed of the agonies and evil of matter. That transition to freedom and salvation depended upon how one lived this current life; many souls would have to return in new bodies to this world until they were sufficiently cleansed of worldly yearnings and sins, whereas a few are purified very quickly and go directly to Heaven, to God. Mani traveled to India to preach, reportedly made many converts in his travels. He wrote scriptures in Aramaic (his tongue) using the Cyrillic script and entreated his followers to see that the message did not get polluted as previous divine messages had been. His scriptural canon reportedly included seven books. When Mani returned to Persia, Shah Shapur I was impressed with him and permitted him freedom to preach in Persia. But Zoroastrian priests were furious. After Shapur died Bahram I became Shah, the Zoroastrian priests were able to convince him that Mani was a charlatan. So Mani was tried, convicted and jailed at Belapet where he soon died (or was put to death). Faced with prosecution in Persia, the movement moved its headquarters to Samarkand and missionaries quietly spread his teachings from there. Over future years it spread East as far as the Chinese royal courts after China had conquered East Turkistan and the trade route to China was established; by the late seventh century, its missionaries were permitted to preach the religion in China. The Uighur Turks converted to Manichaeism after

they conquered East Turkistan and it even became the state religion there until ninth century A.D. It survived until the Mongols came three centuries later, destroying all they conquered.

What is seldom realized is Manichaeism's far-reaching impact on the West. It reached Rome in the 4th century, made many converts of Christians there. *Even some very prominent Christians like St. Augustine actually converted to Manichaeism for a while.* There were Manichaean churches built in southern Gaul and in Spain. It greatly influenced Christian movements like Paulicians (Arenia, 7th century), the Bosnians (10th century), the Bogomiles (Bulgaria 10th century) and the Cathari or Albigensians (Southern France 12th century). These Christian movements inspired by Manichaeism, became, in effect, the earliest Protestant movement in Christendom until the Bosnian Christians converted to Islam. Periodically, these movements were crushed by the established Churches, Roman and Orthodox, their scriptures burned and hundreds of thousands of their believers killed. Mani's own handwritten scriptures "disappeared"; it is rumored that parts of his scriptures did survive and were discovered in early 20th century in East Turkistan and in Egypt.

But much before the message of these esoteric faiths had spread East and West, Pharaoh Akhenaton's abhorrence for war had allowed the Hebrew tribes to carve out their two kingdoms of Israel and Judah in the land of the Canaanites

### (3)

About 1800 B.C., Abram is believed to have left his home in Ur and gone to the land of Canaan. Here, the Old Testament says, God told him to change his name to Abraham (Ibrahim in the Muslim Qur'an) and make a covenant of obedience to God, who in return would bless him and his descendants. The Jews, descended from Abraham through his son Isaac, are believed to have migrated to Egypt about 1700 B.C., became serfs and then virtual slaves a few hundred years later. Moses (the name is *Egyptian*, Musa to Muslims) was born there (13th century B.C.) and survived at birth in the most remarkable way. The Old Testament of the Bible says (and the Qur'an agrees with this broadly) that the Pharaoh had been warned by his soothsayers that a son would be born to a woman among the migrant workers, now reduced to slavery, that this son would lead them out of slavery. So the Pharaoh ordered that the first-born Jewish infant of that time should be killed. Moses' parents, determined to save him, cast him at birth in a wicker basket on the waters of the Nile, and miraculously the basket drifted along the banks of the Nile to the palatial quarters of the Pharaoh's own daughter, who saved the child. So Moses grew up in a non-Hebrew culture under royal care and became prominent in the Egyptian court. Then God told Moses he must lead the Jews out of Egypt. To persuade the Pharaoh, God sent plagues upon the Egyptian people. The Pharaoh was still unwilling to let the Jews go. So God sent the Angel of Death to kill the first born in every Egyptian family. All Jewish households however were spared (a day Jews celebrate today as the Passover). Now the Pharaoh relented, but once the Jews

were crossing the Sea of Reeds (*not* the Red Sea according to Armstrong in *Holy Wars*) the Pharaoh himself led an army to intercept them. God however parted the Red Sea so that the Jews could get across, then closed the path, so the Pharaoh and his army were drowned. "This story of violent miracles was obviously a mythical version of the Hebrews' escape from Egypt, but the myth was crucial in forming the Jews' view of themselves," says Armstrong.<sup>5</sup>

The Bible (Old Testament) says Moses died while the Jews wandered for forty years in Sinai Peninsula, but not before God had given to Moses, on Mount Sinai, the Ten Commandments. In this period, according to the Old Testament, God had also dropped manna from the heavens to feed the Jews (secular scholars have claimed that this "manna" was a natural dew-like phenomenon in the Sinai Peninsula at dawn). Periodically the Jews reverted to paganism. Even when Moses was on Mount Sinai, receiving the Ten Commandments from God, the Jewish people returned to idolatry, made and worshipped a golden calf. Periodically God forgave them. Jews also believe that God gave, in addition to the Ten Commandments, 613 commandments of the Torah to Moses to guide the Jewish people on every small detail of their daily life.

When the Jews reached the land of the Canaanites (which they believed God had given to their ancestor Abraham as the Promised Land), there was a problem. The Canaanites/Palestinians lived there and had lived there for centuries, and were a highly advanced society. "The Habiru, or Hebrews, were a backward nomadic tribe by comparison [to the Canaanites] when they crossed the River Jordan and invaded Palestine. It is noticeable that the Children of Israel are still living in tents, as late as the time of Solomon and his son Rehoboam, though the original peoples [Canaanites] were already living in cities before the time of Abraham... we make the mistake of attributing to Biblical Palestine our own modern and Western European ideas of nationality. In reality, the Israelites were a tribal group, which forced its way into the richer and more cultured agricultural land and eventually settled there. The original inhabitants, of course, remained, and the various groups intermingled and sometimes intermarried" (Lieut-Gen Sir John Glubb *A Soldier With The Arabs*: Hodder and Sloughton, London, 1957).<sup>6</sup>

The Biblical version, however, is different. "I shall exterminate these" God told the Jews "they must not live in your country" (Exodus 23:23, 33, the Bible). Moses died before the Jews reached Canaan but God had already told him that in the land of the Canaanites, "You must make no covenant with them [Canaanites] nor show them any pity" (Deuteronomy 7:1-6, the Bible).

When Joshua, the new leader of the Jews, led them into Canaan about 1200 B.C., they came fully armed for battle, so they took the Canaanites/Palestinians completely by surprise. Joshua "fulfilled the commands of God perfectly. When a town was conquered, it was duly put 'under a ban' which meant total destruction and extermination. Men, women, children and even animals were massacred and the cities reduced to rubble."<sup>7</sup> "All Israel [Jews] returned to Ai and slaughtered all its people. The number of those fell that day, men and women together, was twelve thousand, all people of Ai... Then Joshua burned Ai, making it a ruin for evermore"

(Joshua 8:24, 25, 28, the Bible). "Then Joshua came and wiped out the Anakim from the highlands, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab... No more Anakim were left in Israeli territory except at Gaza, Gath and Ashdod" (Joshua 11:21, 22, the Bible). "In a Jewish holy war, there was no question of peaceful coexistence, [nor of] mutual respect or peace treaties."<sup>8</sup>

Many archaeologists argue that the fall of Jericho could not have been from Jews blowing their trumpets, as that fall occurred two hundred years *before* the Jews came. Some Christian historians, who look to the Bible as well as to secular sources for their facts, say that the Jews were not able to kill all the Canaanites. H. A. Davies (*An Outline History of the World*, Oxford University Press, 1937, p. 233) says "The Canaanites were far more cultured than the invaders... There is no doubt that Hebrews and Canaanites intermarried and ultimately became one people, and that the Hebrews learned much from the more cultured Canaanites. One of the things they learned from them was cuneiform writing... [later] Phoenician merchants taught them how to write on rolls, of papyrus or sheepskin, using pen and ink and alphabetic characters."<sup>9</sup> The Hebrew language is, in fact, a *Canaanite* Palestinian tongue. *Ironically, in our times, the Palestinians are nicknamed philistines, or crude and uneducated, and the Israelis are projected as civilized, advanced.*

According to secular sources, the Palestinians (the Canaanites) had come from Crete and settled centuries earlier in this land now called Palestine, before the Jews invaded. Peace-loving Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaton had not stopped the invasion of Syria by the Hittites and did not now crush the Jewish invasion of Palestine (which was part of his kingdom). Encouraged by this, the Hebrews continued to invade in larger numbers. In about three hundred years after their first invasion (approx. 1300 B.C.) they had made themselves rulers of Palestine. They proclaimed their first king Saul, "who lived in a tent, a striking testimony to the hold which nomadic ideas still had upon this people," says Davies.<sup>10</sup>

"The holy war [conquering Palestine] continued for another two hundred years [after the Jews first came], under the judges and heroes of Israel like Gideon, Deborah and Samson... it is important to notice that it [Jerusalem] did not become 'holy' to the Jews until quite late in its own history." In fact when David (Dawood in the Qur'an) conquered the Jebusite city of Jerusalem (about 1000 B.C.) and wanted later to build a temple there, "God forbade David to build a temple in Jerusalem and there are two versions of this story. In one version God said *he had always been a nomadic God who had never been associated with one particular shrine*... In a later version God forbade David to build the temple because he had shed too much blood," says Armstrong.<sup>11</sup> (italics added). It was much later that Solomon, David's son, (Suleiman in the Qur'an) built the Temple and towns in the new empire. Thousands of Jewish laborers were conscripted. They resented their use as laborers. "Was their position very different from the position of their fathers in Egypt, who had been forced to build Pharaoh's pyramids? [they asked]... When the Temple was completed, there was a further irony. The whole building was designed like a typical Canaanite temple and, instead of expressing the pure monotheism of Moses, the temple had strong pagan elements... later kings [of Israel]



also flirted with paganism and assimilation...the Temple of Solomon was not the only sanctuary in the Promised Land; the older [pagan] temples continued to function and frequently the [Israeli] priests brought aspects of *pagan worship* into the rituals and liturgy of Yahwism," says Armstrong (ibid). During the reign of Solomon's successor, the northern ten tribes of Jews in Palestine revolted against the taxes and about 930 B.C. formed a separate kingdom of Israel. The two tribes in the south formed Judah. About 722 B.C., the northern state of Israel was conquered by the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III, and its ten Jewish tribes were deported, presumably assimilated with the Assyrians; they became, in history, "the lost tribes of Israel."

The frightened Jews of Judah were convinced that God had become angry with them for not being more religious. So Josiah decided there should be a Jewish temple and he built one in Jerusalem. But in 586 B.C. Nabuchadnezzar, the Chaldean king, destroyed Jerusalem and took the Jews prisoners to Babylon. He allowed them, however, to live there as a community in exile. The Jews now made a closer study of the Torah and prophets like Ezekiel told them that if they became truly pious, their God would reward them with a return to the Promised Land. But sixty years were to pass before yet another war, this time between the Babylonians and the Persians, led to their return. The Persians conquered Babylon in 538 B.C., and Cyrus, the Persian king ordered that the Jews be sent to where they came from.

Jewish leaders hailed Cyrus as "The Anointed One", but most Jews did not wish to return. "Some 42,360 Jews left Babylon... began the long journey home. Yet - and this is an important point - most of the Jews remained behind in exile. They no longer saw physical possession of the Holy Land as essential to the Jewish identity...after 538 [B.C.], Babylon remained an important center of Judaism for centuries," writes Armstrong.<sup>12</sup>

The Old Testament books written after this date "somehow show the influence of Gentile culture. Hellenic Stoicism, for example, has fruitfully inspired the Book of Ecclesiastes. The Diaspora [written in exile] Book of Jonah shows real compassion for the non-Jews," says Armstrong.<sup>13</sup> In fact God chides the Jewish prophet Jonah for Jews seeking to monopolize His attention and for the first time shows concern for non-Jews: "Am I not to feel sorry for Nineveh, the great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, to say nothing of all the animals?" (Book of Jonah, 4:11)

The Jews of Babylon who returned to Judah found that the north was again inhabited by Jewish "pagans" who looked down upon the Jews in the south, in Judah, as not their equals any more. "When the native Jews offered to help rebuild Jerusalem, they were told that they had no place in the new Jewish kingdom. This led to hostility and warfare [among the Jews]."<sup>14</sup> In fact, each builder "did his work with one hand while gripping his weapon with the other." (Nehemiah 4:18, the Bible). There was now also a fiercer regimen of ritual imposed by the priests, who steadily became the most powerful body in Palestine. They maintained good relations with the Roman officials, so that their own power over the Jewish people

was supreme. They became rich, the temples became marketplaces for moneylenders

No one dared question them, until many years later when one boy, twelve years of age, had what they considered the gall to teach his elders inside the temple. It is the only recorded incident about Jesus in the New Testament (Luke) until he was about thirty. One of his last recorded acts, as a grown-up, was also in a temple when he angrily chased moneylenders and traders from it. The High Priests who permitted that "trade" were furious at this upstart carpenter/stonecutter's son.

#### (4)

The Bible says that when Moses was about to be born, the Pharaoh was warned by soothsayers that a Jewish child about to be born would create great trouble for him, so he had ordered all Jewish children born then to be executed. Moses was saved by the Pharaoh's own daughter who brought him up as an Egyptian. Then the Bible says this syndrome was repeated about 1500 years later, King Herod (of Jewish descent himself) was told by his soothsayers that a male child was to be born among the Jews of Bethlehem who would create great trouble for Herod and his Roman masters. So King Herod ordered a census of all Jewish births that year to remove the would-be enemy. Mary had an Immaculate Conception. The Qur'an (21:91) also says so, devotes a whole chapter to Mary (Mariam in the Qur'an). She was told by a vision that she was to bear a holy child. The community ostracized the unwed Mary. Fearing for the unborn child after Herod's orders and for tax registration, Mary and Joseph (now her husband) left Bethlehem, went first to Egypt to visit Mary's cousin Elizabeth (who was also pregnant with John the Baptist) then to Nazareth, found no lodgings they could afford, and Mary gave birth to Jesus in a barn. Three "wise" men from the East (generally believed to be Persians) who had seen signs of a great happening had traveled all the way and these signs in the skies led them to the barn where Jesus had just been born.

According to researchers, Jesus (Isa in the Qur'an) was probably born in spring or fall, definitely not in winter. His name, in Hebrew, was Yashwa, which, in translations, became Jesus (note that Yahweh was God). There are no reports about Jesus' life until he was twelve, except that he worked as an assistant to Joseph whom early translators called a carpenter (most translate it now as stone-cutter). Occasionally, Jesus' conduct and words to Mary indicated that he wished to condition her to the fact that his life on earth was to be independent of her (some sources say Mary and Joseph had other children after Jesus).

Because so much has been written and filmed about Jesus, we are apt to believe that there is an enormous amount of information about him. The fact is that these hundreds of accounts about him were written many decades after he departed and these dealt mainly with about the last three years of his life. Many of these accounts contradicted one another in critical ways, the authorship of them all remains uncertain. Remarkably, what is reported to have been the earliest of all accounts, written by the apostle Thomas, was to be rejected by the Church as it did

not refer to Jesus' divinity or his resurrection. Another account which Muslims insist was the gospel by the apostle Barnabas, which agrees very much with the Muslim version of Jesus and his prophecies, is reported by Muslims to have been burnt, but one copy somehow survived, and is today in circulation. Of all the hundreds of accounts written about Jesus, four were eventually to be selected as gospel truth by the Church, and reportedly written by Matthew, Mark and John, his disciples and Luke, a physician. In fact, these accounts were circulated, like hundreds of others about Jesus, at *least sixty years after he departed this world, and many more at least 100 years later after the presumed authors had died.*

These four accounts and the books by Paul (though some scholars dispute his authorship) are the core of the New Testament of the Bible. They were mostly written in Aramaic, the language of the highly advanced Arameans, from whom the present-day Syrians are descended. Aramaic was the language used by Jesus himself.

There are no records, except a comment or two about Jesus until he was about thirty; it is known that he disappeared for long periods of time. While he preached in those last three years, he chose twelve disciples from the poor, making Simon, the fisherman, (whom he renamed Peter, or "rock") his special disciple.

Jesus clearly came as a *reformer* of Jewish society. He *had* to perform extraordinary miracles to have any impact upon a Jewish society convinced for centuries that they were the Chosen People, that the rules and regulations enforced by their religious leaders were all divinely inspired. He is reported to have raised the dead, exorcised devils, cured the disabled and sick. As it turned out, even this was not enough to convince the High Priests that he was sent by God. Jewish society was by now divided between a very few wealthy and the very many poor. It was with the poor that Jesus threw in his lot. God and Money were two different paths, he said. "No servant can be the slave of two masters; you cannot be the slave of God and money" (Luke 16:13, the Bible). And he said "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven" (Luke 18:25). He chased greedy moneylenders out of the temple where the priests, their patrons, had allowed them to practice their usury. And he said "The meek shall inherit the earth." When he saw a prostitute about to be stoned, he challenged the crowd: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone" and they stopped. Housewives and prostitutes followed him. Mary Magdalene became his most devoted follower. Some apocryphal accounts even state that he married her.

He had marvelous yet simple parables for his growing flock. Use what talents you have to the best of your ability and you will please God. What comes out of your mouth is more important than what goes in. He was impatient with rituals; he spoke of generosity, of meekness, righteousness, love of peace, the supreme importance of truth, the rejection of hypocrisy; he said love of God required the love of Man; *God was God of all mankind, not just the Jewish people.* A non-Jew "good Samaritan" in the New Testament, illustrates how a non-Jew, could be a superior, caring person.

The High Priests insisted he used black magic and was not the Messiah. He was beaten, spat upon, once an attempt was made to throw him off a cliff. "A

prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own home" he said. Then the High Priests complained to the Roman authorities that he was inciting the people against Roman rule and the payment of taxes to Rome. Questioned by the Romans, he is reported to have said (after examining a coin with Caesar's image), "Give unto Caesar that which belongs to Caesar." In our times, this is often taken to mean that he advised blind support for secular powers, irrespective of their moral values. Others argue he was adroitly sidestepping the charge and telling people to let Caesar have what he deserves!

He stressed good works, love over hate, and the need to "turn the other cheek." He pointedly cured the sick on Saturday (Jewish Sabbath), thereby angering the high priests. He warned his disciples about these religious leaders: "You must *never* allow yourselves to be called Rabbis since you have only one Master and you are all brothers. *You must call no one on earth your father, since you have only one Father and He is in heaven....* Do not be guided by what they [Rabbis, Scribes, Sadducees] do, since they do not practice what they preach... everything they do is done to attract attention... like taking the place of honor at the banquet and the front seat in the synagogue, being greeted obsequiously in the market square and having people call them Rabbis... Alas for you, Scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You who build the sepulchres of the prophets and decorate the tombs of holy men, saying 'we would never have joined in shedding the blood of the prophets had we lived in our fathers' days'. So! Your own evidence tells against you. Very well then, finish off the work that your fathers started. You generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell?" (Matthew 23.8-33, The Jerusalem Bible).

The Rabbis, Sadducees and Scribes tried more than once to "finish off the work" by having him arrested. In effect the Jewish High Priests had been appointed the local government by the Romans. When they sent armed guards to capture Jesus, for some reason they needed Judas (one of his twelve disciples) to identify him, and he did that for 30 pieces of silver. Jesus *did* argue at his trial: "I spoke openly to the world...In secret have I said nothing" (John 18:20) And he argued "If I have spoken evil, bear witness. But if well, why do you smite me?" (John 18:23) As the High Priests charged that he claimed to be "King of the Jews" and was therefore guilty of treason against the Roman authorities, Pontius Pilate had to take some action. Pontius Pilate felt he was harmless, and wished to let him go. But the High Priests and the crowds demanded his crucifixion, even Peter denied him thrice, as Jesus had predicted he would. Pilate still sought to free him by offering the crowds a choice between saving Jesus or one of the two thieves about to be hanged as well. The public, according to the Bible, chanted "crucify him[Jesus]" and chose to have the life of Barrabas, a thief and murderer, saved instead. Some scholars point to Jesus' last words (in the Bible) as highly significant. At first, it is said, he called on God to "forgive them for they know not what they do." But then he also complained to God, as Armstrong points out.<sup>15</sup> "It has been suggested that he was expecting the Kingdom of God to arrive in a great cosmic miracle...When this miracle did not happen, Jesus' despair and bewilderment echo



in his cry from the cross: 'My God! My God! Why have you deserted me?' (Mark 15:34) Biblical accounts say he was crucified, that his body disappeared from the grave, that he rose from the dead on the third day, appeared to some of his disciples in human form.

There had been periods in the past when Jews had *not* been exclusively monotheistic. And their kings had occasionally at least condoned the worship of other deities; even *Prophet Solomon, after building the Temple of Jehovah, had also built temples in Jerusalem for Moloch, the god of the Ammonites and for Chemosh, the god of the Moabites*. But then Solomon's mystical approach to religion had been confusing to Jews, especially when he married so often and took to wife many non-Jews.

Under Aha, who ruled the northern kingdom from 876 to 854 B.C., there had been real straying, when "the worship of Jehovah was dominated by the worship of Baal, the divinity of Tare whence Aha's wife, Jezebel, had come."<sup>16</sup> Jews for many generations had been conditioned to believe that Jehovah was their own personal God that the Scribes, Rabbis and Sadducees were the final authorities on what God wished, and prophets were the conduits of revelations from Him from time to time, that *there was not any afterlife to this world*. All aspects of life were ruled by now under directives from the priestly class.

There had been, for a while, even a change in the perception of God. The Old Testament claims that at the time of Moses, He was exclusively theirs, a vengeful God Who told them to kill an entire people (the Canaanites) to make room for His people. But more recently, especially after the northern Jewish kingdom had been conquered, there was a marked change. *There was now even a suggestion that God might have concerns for the other peoples He had created.*

Prophet Isaiah announced, *"Israel shall be the third with Egypt and with Assyria... whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance"* (Isaiah 21:24-5, the Bible). The exile to Babylon had also shown that God did not dwell in Palestine alone. And the Book of Jonah showed His concern for other people too. Solomon's era had also widened perceptions. Solomon himself "did not feel threatened by the surrounding paganism and felt that a degree of assimilation was acceptable in Yahwaism... The Temple of Solomon was *not* the only sanctuary in the Promised Land; the older [pagan] temples continued to function and frequently the priests brought aspects of pagan worship into rituals and liturgy of Yahwaism" writes Armstrong (p. 10,11).<sup>17</sup>

But it is important to understand that in Jesus' time, perhaps because there was considerable interest in Hellenism among educated Jews, there had been a strict return to the narrower interpretation of Judaism under the directives of the High Priests. Once more, God was *their* God, and *they* the Chosen People. These High Priests enjoyed great power, they were wealthy and on good friendly terms with the Romans. The Jewish public was completely under their domination.

The High Priests showered contempt upon Jesus when they heard about him. He was, they said, a black magician. There were, therefore, only some Jews, mainly

poor, who became his followers and convinced that Jesus had been the long-awaited Messiah. The rest did not. *In fact, there had always been uncertainty in Jewish minds whether in fact there was an afterlife*. Interestingly, there are records only of Zaratustra and Akhenaton among the monotheists, before Jesus, as having spoken clearly about an afterlife and Judgment Day. There had been no clear reference to a Day of Judgment and Afterlife in the Old Testament until the Book of Daniel when there was a suggestion that the Kingdom To Come may be too vast for this earth. "And all Jewish prophecies had seemed to suggest that there would be a Messiah who would come and rule like a Divine King on this earth, Jews had entrenched visions in their minds of some prince who would arrive and outshine all the princes of the world" reports Davies.<sup>18</sup> Jesus certainly did *not* fit that image, in his rags, his fishermen friends, and his call to disciples to leave behind all material wealth if they wished to follow him. And the Kingdom, which Jesus talked about, was not one of earthly splendor for his people, but in the life to come, a moral kingdom where the test for admission would be virtue, righteousness, love of God, love of peace, love of mankind, with no reference to any Chosen People! Jews heard, many had even seen that Jesus performed remarkable miracles, but as the Rabbis, Scribes, and Sadducees said — that was magic, probably black magic.

Some Christian scholars question whether Jesus literally rose after being crucified. In *The Hiram Key*, by Chris Knight and Robert Lomas, they argue not only that the Knights Templars of Jerusalem had no historical link with the Temple of Solomon and certainly none with hygiene ("these conscientious knights did not remove their breeches [ever] not even to wash themselves [in the] many decades that many of them spent under the desert sun")<sup>19</sup> but argue that the title of Christ came from the Greek word for "the anointed one", that the Jews had never been looking for such an other-worldly figure but a *political leader*, that the Gnostic Christian Bible identifies with resurrection, but a *living* resurrection from acquiring divine knowledge. They argue that aside from the Dead Sea Scrolls which have been suppressed in Israel from open scrutiny since their accidental discovery by an Arab boy in 1945, many other early works have been "buried nearly 1600 years ... Had they not been, Christianity would have developed in a very different direction ... the survival and theological structure of the Roman Catholic Church has always been dependent on the suppression of ideas contained within these [buried] books" say Knight and Lomas.<sup>20</sup> And they point to the history of spiritual leaders over previous centuries who were said to be born of virgin births (Dionysius, Quirinus, Attis, Adonis, etc) but most of all Mithra (or Mithras) for whom there had been a large following in the Roman Empire from around 600 B.C. to Jesus' own times. Mithra was said to have been "born of a virgin in a stable on 25 December... His resurrection was celebrated at Easter." That identification with "Easter" was evidentially the pagan Easter celebrated over past centuries.<sup>21</sup> "Mithraism was similar to Christianity in many respects, for example, in the ideals of humility and brotherly love, baptism, the rite of communion, the use of holy water, the adoration of the shepherds at Mithra's birth, of December 25 (Mithra's birthday) as holy days, and the belief in the immortality of the soul, the last judgment, and the

resurrection." says Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002. "After Constantine I accepted Christianity in the early 4th century, Mithraism rapidly declined" says the Encyclopedia Britannica.

*Because the same God had sent Mithra as did Jesus, one can argue why so much of their characteristics and teaching were identical. But clearly the selection of December 25 as Christ's birthdates was to wipe away the remnants of worship of Mithraism in Europe. After Constantine selected Christianity over Mithraism and over the Isis trinity (the third most prominent religion in Europe), he commenced the slaughter of the believers in the other two faiths, even though he delayed becoming a baptized Christian until his deathbed.*

## (5)

As we have seen, Jews had been "strongly attracted to the Hellenic culture of the Roman Empire. They did not feel they had a duty to oppose Roman rule." There were some Jews, however, even aside from the newly converted Christians, who sharply disagreed with this attitude. Jesus and John the Baptist were probably of them. "The Essenes (to which some say Jesus belonged) believed that the Jerusalem Temple was contaminated by the priestly party, the Sadducees, who cooperated with the Roman authorities."<sup>22</sup>

Some years after Jesus' remarkable life, these dissidents finally rose in rebellion. But by 70 AD, the rebellions had been quelled by the Romans who took Jerusalem, renamed it Aelia and burned Solomon's Temple. Most Jews had either fled or were forcibly exiled. One extreme group committed suicide, writes Armstrong. Some Jews remained faithful to Roman rule. "Rabbis known as the *tannaim* began work on what would ultimately become the Talmud... They accepted Roman occupation of Palestine, cooperated with the Roman authorities and condemned any further conflict with Rome" says Armstrong<sup>23</sup>

"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me." (John: 14:7) It was this report in the New Testament, attributed to Jesus, which was to shape so much of world history over future centuries. Muslims believe in Jesus as a major prophet, the Qur'an honors Mary greatly. But the Church insist that Christians were now, in effect, the Chosen People, and only Christians who believed in the *divinity* of Jesus would enter heaven. It was the Christian duty, therefore, to communicate this Message to all non-believers. Soon aggressive conversions of others become an integral part of Christianity. Those who do not accept this divinity argue that he meant Jews should accept him as God's messenger, as their latest reformer. Matthew reports that when a woman of Canaan clung to his garment, begging him to come and cure her daughter, he first brushed her aside; when she persisted, he said "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel... It is not right to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." When she pleaded, "dogs eat of the crumbs, which fall from their masters' table," Jesus applauded her devotion, went and cured her daughter (Matthew 15:22-28). Even if one views this incident as a test employed by Jesus,

the fact is that, if Matthew's gospel is accurate, Jesus stressed he was sent primarily to reform Judaism.

## (6)

Saul, a military man of Jewish birth, had furiously prosecuted Christians. He had never met or even seen Jesus in his lifetime. But he said he had a vision of Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus and converted to Christianity with even greater passion for Christianity than he had shown prosecuting Christians. Saul (now called Paul at the order of the vision) decided to devote the rest of his life to the spread of Christianity. Extreme guilt at his own past gave him the passion with which he set out to convert the world by *any and every means*. He was evidently convinced that (1) Not just belief in Jesus' mission but *in his divinity* was necessary to be saved from hell and (2) Jews were *still* the Chosen People, but needed to accept the divinity of Christ and his Message above the previous revelations, and (3) the Second Coming of Christ would be very soon. In fact Paul insisted the Second Coming would be *in his own lifetime* as did almost all Christians of the time, because Jesus is reported in the Bible (Luke 9:42-27) to have said "I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God" Paul focused first on converting Jews wherever he could find them in his travels but he also believed that accepting Jesus as the Son of God was essential for the conversion of all mankind. He proceeded now to travel, to preach and convert. Critics would later charge that he developed the concept of Trinity from the ancient trinity beliefs prevalent in prominent pagan religions of the time. There was, for instance, the very popular, long-established trinity of Osiris, Isis and Horus in the ancient civilizations of Egypt and Syria; far-off India had the supreme trinity of Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu. Even pagan Arabia had its own trinity of top gods: Lat, Uzza and Manat. Of course, others would argue that if the concept of trinity has prevailed through the ages, it is because it *is* the true concept, only the names of those who comprise the trinity have been changed from time to time.

Paul traveled to foreign lands initially with some of Jesus' disciples. But soon he had serious differences with them, even with James, the brother of Jesus, now head of the church in Jerusalem, and with Peter too. They felt he cut corners in his enthusiasm; there were even angry exchanges between them as a result.

As is apparent from books attributed to Paul in the Bible (Acts, Romans, Corinthians, though many have doubts about who wrote them, as they appeared several decades after Paul died) Paul's strategy was to reach the Jewish communities first in each foreign country to which he traveled, and seek to convert them before the pagans. This was, the most logical thing to do, as Jews were already believers in One God and had Judeo-Christian roots. In his arguments to them, Paul emphasized that Jesus and Paul himself were of Jewish origin but that with the coming of the Messiah (Jesus) the Law of Moses was secondary to faith in Jesus. Jesus' original disciples criticized the concession he made at times in his enthusiasm, especially when, after rejecting circumcision as an article of faith, he had the adult



Timothy circumcised to satisfy a Jewish congregation, but when this ancient rite met with great resistance from Gentiles, he said it was no longer necessary. However he reportedly told Jews that their ancient "covenant" with God making them His chosen people, was *not* affected by the new Christian doctrine and its inclusion of all the peoples of the world.

His success with the Gentiles, critics say, was because of the concessions he made. The old pagan religions understood gods, not prophets. The Son of God who performed extraordinary miracles was something they liked, especially if he was part of a Holy Trinity, as their ancient religions had such a concept too. Years later, when the Church permitted statues to be made, *"the first form of the Virgin and Child was the counterpart of Isis and Horus...from time immemorial, the Egyptians had been familiar with various trinities, different ones being worshipped in different times"*.<sup>24</sup> The simplicity of the lives of these early Christians, their deep faith, also influenced others, especially the poor, at a time when societies in these fringes of Asia Minor and Europe were, as Stoic Philosopher Seneca put it, "filled with crimes and vices." "But the Stoic philosophy made its chief appeal to educated people: it had little influence on the poor, among whom Christianity made great headway... Paul so adopted and explained the Christian religion that it seemed to include the essentials of all the religions with which it came into contact".<sup>25</sup>

Paul was successful among pagan Gentiles, especially those to whom he presented Christianity as a refined reaffirmation of their own pagan beliefs brought by the Son of God who had performed incredible miracles and had risen from the dead, just as their ancient god Isis had done. By 59 AD, the Christian Church had been established at Antioch, at Philippi, at Ephesus and at Rome. *Gibbon and others report that the conversion to Christianity was greatly aided by belief that the Second Coming of Christ would be in Paul's own lifetime, and eternal damnation for those who did not convert in time (Davis, 247, 248, also Gibbon Decline, Ch. XV).*<sup>26</sup> Paul's passionate yearning to convert was to set the pattern in future years for Christians to feel they could only be good Christians if they constantly sought to convert non-Christians.

## (7)

The world did not end, but there was considerable turmoil, during the next four centuries, between the Christian Church and its flock. Accounts about Jesus had eventually been written in the lands where Jesus had lived. There were hundreds of accounts written as decades passed and many contradicted one another. Paul's teaching of Jesus as divine was to cause some of the early Gospels to be rejected. Even the Gospel according to St. Thomas, reportedly the first Gospel, was not selected for the Bible, as *Thomas did not refer to Jesus as Son of God or even to the Resurrection.*

The task was made even more difficult not only because literacy was scarce even among the new Christian clergy but these accounts were written mostly in

Aramaic and a few in Greek. It was the Church of distant Rome that insisted Peter and Paul had come to Rome, been martyred there, so it was the "Rock" of Christianity, not the older Eastern Churches.

While many hearts were enthralled with the purity of the message of Christ and the many reports of the extraordinary miracles he had performed, there was dissension within the clergy regarding which of the written reports were absolutely factual (gospel truth) and which were not. Spiritual questions were discussed especially in the more advanced Eastern societies of Antioch and Alexandria. Who was Jesus? Son of God or prophet? After all, in the Aramaic tongue, it was normal to speak about God as "Our father", to refer to believers as "children of God." There were to be priests, devout followers of Jesus, who asked to be allowed freedom to live with their faith that did not accept Jesus as divine. They were systematically ostracized, and many killed, such as Erroneus (130-200 AD), Treutlen (160-220 AD), Origen (185-254 AD), Lucian (put to death 312 AD). And of course there was Arius or Arius (250-336 AD) with a vast following who proclaimed that Jesus was *from* God but not *of* God. Soon there were sects, formed by followers of these dissident priests who survived, among them Nestorism, Monophysites, and most of all, the followers of Bishop Arius. *For the first few centuries, the belief that Jesus was a Divine messenger prevailed over much of Christendom.* Arius preached that Jesus was a great prophet, somehow even associated with divinity, but *not* Son of God, that the word "son" (as reported in the biographies written about Jesus), was not intended to be taken literally. But while the spiritual could understand the issue, the populace could not be easily converted to a religion whose founder was a mere "prophet". Pagan Europe understood gods, not the alien concept of a mere messenger or prophet.

There were deep differences between Rome and Churches in the Middle East. The most prominent bishoprics of the time were those of Antioch, Alexandria (Egypt), Carthage (Syria) and Rome. The Western (Roman) Church tended to be pragmatic in its approach to religion, the Eastern Churches (in the more developed older societies) focused on a more spiritual theology. When, Tertullian of Carthage argued that certain sins such as murder, fornication, idol-worship, deserved permanent excommunication from the Church, Pope Callixtus of Rome *opposed that.* "The widespread adoption of this rule by the Church, surrounded by a pagan [European] world could only have led to the Church remaining a small body of the spiritual elite" explains Martin Scott.<sup>27</sup> *Rules were relaxed to invite more converts.*

There were some deeply spiritual Christians in Rome of course, and sharp differences surfaced within that Church as a result. That spelt added danger, as the Church in Rome could see. Historically, all over Europe, warfare was a way of life punctuated by rampaging invasions by tribes more wild and murderous than others, such as the Vandals, the Saxons, Avars, Vends, and the Huns. Religious differences added new fuel to unending tribal warfare. *"There was really no Europe in ancient times"* explains Prof. R.R. Palmer of Princeton University in *A History of the Modern World* (Knopf, 1958) "In the Roman Empire we may see a Mediterranean world, or even a West and an East in the Latin- and Greek-speaking portions. But the

West included parts of Africa as well as Europe, and Europe as we know it was divided by the Rhine/Danube frontier, south and west of which lay the civilized provinces of the Empire, and north and east the 'barbarians' of whom the civilized world knew almost nothing... these barbarians, *always with the exception of Persia*, had never been brought within the pale of ancient civilization. They remained illiterate, unsettled, townless, more or less nomadic, and frequently bellicose... the Romans simply drew a line beyond which they themselves rarely ventured, and would not allow the barbarians to pass.<sup>28</sup>

The Romans had created a culture imbibing much of the contemporary Greek and other Eastern cultures. In time, however, like Persia and Macedonia, the Roman Empire had become too vast; corruption was everywhere, at all levels, and the empire was tottering despite the riches which Cleopatra's recent fortunes had brought after Octavius defeated her and Mark Anthony then, presumably for insurance, killed Caesarian, her son by Julius Caesar. The emperors and the elite lived a life of extreme debauchery, with no rules to govern their personal conduct as they were considered the literal offspring of the gods. To keep the masses involved away from reality - a tactic, which was to become so skillfully used by governments in the twentieth century - the Roman rulers kept increasing cheap entertainment programs arranged for the masses, but to no avail. Even after Christianity arrived, the "barbarians" to the north and east had dealt great blows to Rome. Within a few decades after Julius Caesar had conquered Britain, the Angles and Saxons overran Roman Britain, the Franks invaded Gaul, the Vandals reached Roman Africa, the Goths were in Italy and into Constantinople, took Greece, sacked Rome, and were into Spain while Attila, who grew up as a friend of Rome's elite families, at first Rome's savior and lover of the Caesar's sister Honoria, reportedly denied marriage to her by the Church, reached France and central Europe about 450 A.D. Truth is hard to decipher. We are told Pope Leo met with Attila and prevailed upon him to return home to Hungary with a new bride, she poisoned him.

Preaching the immaculate and deeply spiritual message of Jesus was no easy task amidst Europe's own barbarism and that of the Near East. To begin with, there was always genuine confusion and bitter differences even among the clergy, about the very fundamentals of the new religion. In the 4th century, the contention of Bishop Arius of Alexandria prevailed among most of the educated and the elite, that Jesus was "posterior to the Father." The Roman Church however insisted that Jesus was literally Son of God, as divine as the Father. This was more easily acceptable to Europe's millions, only recently converted from paganism and its gods and goddesses. The more complex spiritual and philosophical questions, which this belief created, were of greater concern to the Eastern Church than to the West. "In Western Europe, the questions which had so profoundly agitated the East, such as the nature of God, the Trinity, the cause of evil, had made but little impression, the intellectual peculiarity of the people being unsuited to such exercises" explains Draper.<sup>29</sup>

There were many in Europe who converted out of deep faith and devotion. But much of the conversions to Christianity were with the sword of warriors like

Constantine, Theodosius, Theophilus, and Charlemagne. The conversion to Christianity did not end the massacres. Now there were massacres from doctrinaire differences between the newly converted Christians. Next came the "barbarians" from the north, the Goths, the Visigoths, the Vandals. They attacked and conquered Gaul, Spain, much of Italy and were inside Rome.

The mass conversion of Europe to Christianity was started by Constantine, the fierce warrior. He was illiterate, had many wives and many concubines to whom he constantly added more. Constantine was *not* a Christian, but he evidently decided that Christianity would be both a unifying element among his own forces and win him the support of the growing Christian Church. His armies now proceeded with more conquests, slaughtering away until the survivors yielded and accepted Christianity. While his campaign reduced Europe's population a good deal, it did lead to a large Christianized base. It has been said that he did it more for conquests and adroitly used the support of the Church for this purpose, because as he made his vast conquests he "sought partnership for the restoration of order... he found it in the Christian Church which, though in minority in [Constantine's] Empire as a whole, gained adherents" says George Kirk ("A Short History of the Middle East"). The Pope showered him with praise beyond his own expectations, naming him *Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire*. "As for the pope's temporal rule of Rome, it was affirmed that the Emperor Constantine had endowed the bishop [pope] with the government of the city [Rome]. This 'Donation of Constantine' was accepted as historical fact from the eighth century to the fifteenth, when it was proved to be a forgery" says R.R. Palmer.<sup>30</sup>

As Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Constantine decided he would be safer from enemies in the Byzantine city he now renamed Constantinople, the "New Rome" in the new Byzantine Empire. His curious vision of religion is evidenced by the fact that at the church there (now the famous Sophia) he had frescos painted (still preserved in what is now Istanbul) in which he is clearly depicted as equal to Jesus.

It was Constantine, at the urging of the Church in Rome, who called the Council of Nicea in AD 325, at which Bishop Arius of Alexandria was condemned. Constantine banished him and ordered that anyone found with any book written by Arius should be put to death. The Council also passed a vaguely worded resolution that the Son was the same substance as the Father. "I am being prosecuted," said Bishop Arius "because I have taught that the Son had a beginning and the Father had not," writes Draper.<sup>31</sup> Later, Constantine's sister prevailed upon him to allow Bishop Arius to return and plead his case. Constantine relented, banished Athanasius (whom he had appointed as Bishop of Alexandria in place of Arius), and asked the new replacement to receive Arius. There was fury among powerful clergy opposed to Arius. Rather conveniently, Arius was seized by a sudden illness the day he was to return to Alexandria, and died. Some suspected poison, but others claimed it was God's punishment. It was reported that Constantine planned to call a new council to correct the decision made at Nicea which had condemned Arius when he took ill as well and died. Some historians report that



on his deathbed, his sister prevailed upon him to be baptized. She was a Christian, but a follower of Bishop Arius.

Constantine died 337 AD. His son Louis the Pious expelled his father's many wives and mistresses but increased the slave trade, and Europe had the usual tribal wars. In the Church, the debauchery and corruption continued unabated. In some instances, Popes were appointed "by prostitutes to their paramours or illegitimates, in some to mere boys of precociously dissolute life; before long, in 1044 AD, it was actually to be sold for money" reports Draper.<sup>32</sup> Lesser clergy also became very wealthy with large estates and many mistresses. Clergy "steadily increased the number of slaves... sometimes one man possessed more than 20,000 of them." Pious women stopped entering the portal of the Vatican as they were grabbed by priests and ravished. Anyone who died without bequeathing a part of his property to the Church had to die without the sacraments, and received no Christian burial. Ordeals by fire and boiling water determined guilt or innocence for crimes. If you survived you were guilty, a sorcerer. It was now believed firmly that the first millennium (1,000 years after Christ) would end the world.<sup>33</sup>

The Vandals and Gepidae were converted to Christianity in the fourth century, the Franks in the fifth century, the Alemanni and Lombards in the six, the Bavarians, Hessians and Thuringians in the seventh and eighth. *They all embraced Bishop Arius' version of Christianity except the French who became Catholics.*<sup>34</sup>

The sudden death of Bishop Arius and other clerics who thought like him had greatly reduced the strength to those opposed to the Pauline Doctrine of Holy Trinity. However, it did not end dissensions. "The heresy[sic] of Arius, though it might suit the monotheistic views of the educated, did not commend itself to that large mass who had been so recently pagan."<sup>35</sup> But when mass conversion to a religion is at the point of a sword, belief is superficial "In truth, however, these [European] nations were only Christianized upon the surface, their conversions being indicated by little more than their making the sign of the cross...it has been truly said that for these conversions three conditions were necessary — a devout female of the court, a national calamity and a monk. As to the people [of these tribes] they seem to have followed the example of their rulers in bland subservience... As might be expected, a faith so lightly assumed at the will or whim of the sovereigns was often as lightly cast aside; thus the Swedes, Bohemians and Hungarians relapsed into idolatry."<sup>36</sup>

In fact, even Rome and Spain "relapsed into idolatry" for a time. The "barbarian" Northern tribes swooped down and conquered much of Gaul, Spain and were in Rome. Many of the newly converted Christian masses were convinced that the end of sacrifices to Jupiter had caused these calamities. *So strong was this belief that at one point the pope allowed pagan sacrifices to Jupiter to be resumed,* says Draper.

The Roman Church however continued to insist on the Pauline Doctrine, that Jesus was literally Son of God. In his opposition, Bishop Macedonius of Constantinople now was even more explicit in one respect than Arius "not only asserting the inferiority of the Son to the Father, but by absolutely denying the

divinity of the Holy Ghost." Pelagus, a monk, (about 400 A.D.) traveled around Europe proclaiming that (1) the Grace of God comes according to our merits, not just faith (2) baptism by water does not wash away sins but good acts do (3) Adam's sin did not cause all his progeny to be sinful but that we sin from pure free will. Nestorius, Bishop of Antioch (the oldest Christian Church) said we must distinguish between the divine and human nature of Christ, that Mary should not be seen as Mother of God. "Could a creature bear the uncreated?" he asked.<sup>37</sup>

In the 4th century alone there had been 45 councils, 13 had decided against Bishop Arius' teaching, but 15 had decided in his favor.<sup>38</sup> At the council of Ephesus (431 A.D.) the Bishop of Rome (later called the Pope) was made arbitrator. Nestorius was banished to the deserts of Egypt, and in the ensuing fights, the Bishop of Alexandria murdered the Bishop of Constantinople.<sup>39</sup> At the Council of Chalcedon, (451 A.D.) a confusing decision was arrived at, giving Rome superior status, yet insisting that the Bishop of Rome and the Bishop of Constantinople were of equal status. Fierce battles ensued often between rival candidates for choice offices within the Church. "At the election of [Bishop] Damascus, one hundred and thirty of the slain lay in the basilica of Sisinnius: the competitors [for this office] had called in a rabble of gladiators, charioteers, and other ruffians."<sup>40</sup>

Like Constantine, Emperor Theodosius had decreed that only those who followed the Bishop of Rome were true Christians; others should be deprived of all rights, banished or put to death. *Theodosius set an example himself, being personally responsible "for the massacre of 7,000 persons whom in a fit of anger he had murdered in the circus of Thessalonica in AD 390"* reports Prof. Draper.<sup>41</sup>

Soon the Eastern Church also rejected the cultural depth of the ancient civilizations it sprang from, and now joined the Western Church in denouncing secular learning. Ecclesiastical directives denounced science and astronomy. Geography and history were, from now on, only to be studied as the Church thought they should be and therefore to be the monopoly of the clergy. Lactantius condemned the belief that the world was round, and asked "Is it possible that men can be so absurd as to believe that the crops and the trees on the other side of the earth hang downwards, and that men have their feet higher than their heads?" St. Augustine went even farther. "It is impossible that there should be inhabitants on the opposite side of the earth, since no such race is recorded in scripture among the descendants of Adam."<sup>42</sup> By now, of the innumerable accounts about Jesus, four that agreed on major issues had been selected as Gospel Truth, the New Testament, so that there was finally, within the Roman and Constantinople Churches, agreement at least on the basics of the Christian faith.

Having decided now that Jesus was Son of God, all past cultures (other than the Judaic culture of the Old Testament) were declared evil, the work of the devil. So it was the duty of Christians to destroy these civilizations and kill their devilish practitioners. "In the reign of Theodosius the Great, the pagan religion and pagan knowledge were altogether destroyed... the temple of Serapis and its library were doubly hateful" says Draper. Egyptian Ptolemy Philadelphus had set up a great library in Bruchion. Eumenes, King of Pergamis, had set up another of equally

great proportions. The second great Alexandrian library, estimated to contain 400,000 volumes, was said to have been burnt during the siege by Julius Caesar of that city, but which Mark Anthony had replenished to all its former glory for Cleopatra. All these treasures of learning had been "transferred to the Serapion, which was... the greatest depository of human knowledge in the world. The pagan Roman emperors had not been unmindful of the great trust they had inherited from the Egyptian Ptolemies. And there were paintings of incalculable value on the walls of Serapis." *Now Archbishop Theophilus had the temples and the libraries burned with all their contents, after "the gold and silver in the temples were carefully removed"* reports Prof. Draper.<sup>43</sup>

The belief that Jesus was Son of God was now gradually dominant. Many of the followers of Bishop Arius, as well as the "one nature" Monophysites and the Nestorians had been killed or converted and only a minority survived in scattered and hidden groups; eventually those who survived escaped to West Asia and Africa or were killed. Periodically, there was massive slaughter of those Christianity displeasing to those in power. Emperor Theodosius "the Great", soon to rule both East and West Christian Empires, announced in February 28, 380AD that all Christians must believe in the Trinity and he proceeded to put to the sword those who did not, slaughtering in the process most inhabitants of several towns.

The famous Greek temple of Canopus was totally destroyed. Hypatia, a very beautiful, brilliant woman, was famous as a great mathematician and a Ptolemaic scholar of repute. The Alexandrian aristocracy loved her lectures on the great Greek philosophers. Prof. Draper reports that Cyril, the nephew of Archbishop Theophilus went after her with a mob in 412 A.D.. She was caught as she left her chariot one day, taken to a nearby church "and in that sacred edifice killed by the club of Peter the Reader...they outraged the naked corpse, dismembered it and, incredible to be said, finished their infernal crime by scraping the flesh from the bones with oyster shells, and casting the remnants into the fire... Cyril's act passed unquestioned. It was now ascertained that throughout the Roman world there must be no liberty of thought"<sup>44</sup>

In the meanwhile, Europe's marauding tribes continued with their secular and religious conquests and reconquests. When Jerome completed the first Latin translation (the Vulgate) of the official Bible, the Gothic King Alaric ruled Rome. The Goths were later defeated. Then the Vandals conquered Rome and by 476 A.D. the Western Holy Roman Empire became extinct, says Draper.<sup>45</sup> Justinian's General Belisarius retook Rome in 556 A.D., lost it again to the Goths, and then retook it. The Churches of Rome and Constantinople competed fiercely for dominance in Christendom by excommunicating each other. *And with the firm belief that anything done in the name of Christianity was good and right, with literacy confined to the clergy, history could be rewritten at will. Distortions were seen as absolutely acceptable in the name of religion. "The same principle was carried out in numberless legends, many of them deliberate forgeries,"* writes Draper. For some time, the Church had condemned religious images, even though it had allowed some pagan practices. At the second Council of Nicea, religious

painting and sculpture were made acceptable but "the actual worship [of images] did not start until the 4th century and was condemned by the Council of Illiberis" writes Draper.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, by the 6th century this worship was commonplace. *The "people believed that the saint was present in the image... Pagan idolatry had reappeared... In truth the population of the Greek and Latin countries were no more than nominally converted and superficially Christianized... a tendency to idolatry seemed to be the necessary incident of the climate,"* writes Draper. Concessions were being made by the Church periodically to win popular support. Several pagan customs were soon incorporated into the practice of Christianity, especially at festivals. For instance, there was a major Scandinavian pagan festival to celebrate the Winter Solstice (the longest days of the year). No one really knew exactly when Jesus was born, but in 354 AD, Bishop Liberius proposed and obtained the agreement of the Roman Church to institutionalize December 25 as his birth date. Other Churches chose different days around that time; the Eastern (Orthodox) Church established Christmas to be January 7. In reality, most scholars believe Jesus was born in the spring, and his true birth was 4-6 years before what the Christian calendar places it.

December 25 was clearly selected as Jesus' birthdate probably to replace the adulation that still prevailed for Mithra/Mitras. Mithra had become a "sky god" in the Indo-Aryan pantheon "Mithraism, the worship of the ancient Indo-Iranian god of light, Mithra, became early Christianity's most serious rival as the mystery cult rapidly spread from Syria and Anatolia throughout the Roman Empire, reaching into Gaul and [what later became] Britain" says Grolier Encyclopedia (1999). When Constantine joined forces with the Catholic Church, "Mithraism suffered persecution ...and it gradually died out. *Significantly, Mithra's birth was commemorated on December 25*" for centuries. Legend had also always maintained he was born miraculously. Jesus' birth was first celebrated in Rome on December 25 in 336 AD, shortly after the Council in Nicea in 325 ruled that he was Son of God. This date "was probably chosen to coincide with the Roman winter solstice festival and birthday of Mithra" says the Encyclopedia Britannica (1999 edition).

Gradually, pagan customs were also to become incorporated into Christian festivals. The northern European pagan tribes had worshipped the tree that is today known as the Christmas tree; the Druids worshipped the mistletoe. "Yule" is a Norse word for a pagan twelve-day festival. There was an ancient Roman pagan rite, Saturnalia, which lasted twelve days. "Easter" was a pagan festival of the spring, the egg a symbol of that festival of rebirth, with the Easter "Bunny Rabbit" added later.

At first the Cross was without adornment. Later, it became the crucifix.. Virgin Mary was veiled in the earliest representations. "The Egyptian sculptors had thus depicted Isis; the first form of the Virgin and Child was the counterpart of Isis and Horus...from time immemorial, the Egyptians had been familiar with various trinities, different ones being worshipped in different times." Draper points out.<sup>47</sup>

"In the Greek Orthodox Church of the Byzantine Empire, war was always regarded as un-Christian and during a campaign a soldier was denied the



sacraments... [However] By the time of the Crusades, European Christians firmly believed that before the final apocalypse [the final war at the end of the world as foretold in the last book of the New Testament] Antichrist would appear in Jerusalem... fight the Christians. These terrible wars would herald the Last Days and the Second Coming of Christ. Some people saw Antichrist [the devil, the enemy of Christ] as a diabolic monster, like the Beast in [the Book of] Revelation; others saw him as an ordinary but absolutely evil human being... *Belief in Antichrist was very important in the ideology of crusading*" explains Armstrong.<sup>48</sup> While the Trinity was now dominant, there were periodic uproars when questions were raised about the concept. No less an authority than Pope Honorius (who died in 638 A.D.) caused shocks of horror when he proclaimed God to be "one mind, not three."

It was while this was going on, that word arrived of an explosive new challenge for the Church: another religion was spreading all over the Middle East. It claimed Jesus was a great Prophet, a Messiah, but not, literally, Son of God.

### (7)

A man called Muhammad had proclaimed the religion of Islam in Mecca. He said it was not a new religion, but a reaffirmation of the religion taught by all prophets, from Adam on down, but with updated directives. Muhammad was God's final prophet and said it was blasphemy to associate partners with God. Instantly, the Christian Church saw the grave challenge it posed with its claim that Jesus was a prophet of God, not His son. And Islam was spreading rapidly, winning epoch battles against mighty empires.

Professor Draper, a Christian, did not believe Islam was divinely inspired, yet he sees it as humankind's salvation. "And so for the next two centuries things remained [in the Christian world], until oppression for many was ended by a foreign invader. It was well for the world that the Arabian conquerors avowed their true argument... and were able to make Egypt once more illustrious among the nations of the earth — to snatch it from the hideous fanaticism, ignorance and barbarism [of the Christian Church] into which it had plunged. On the shore of the Red Sea once more a degree of the earth's surface was to be measured and her size ascertained — but by a Muslim astronomer — the discovery of the motion of the sun's apogee by Albategnius, and the third inequality of the moon, the variation, by Aboul Wefa [a Muslim], to be 'discovered' [again] six centuries later in Europe by Tycho Brahe" he says.<sup>49</sup>

But the Christian Church saw the advent of Islam as a terrible disaster. In India, the Buddhist King Ashoka was building a powerful empire. In primitive lands like England, the Druids were preaching reincarnation. But the Church saw Islam as a special danger, even though it said Jesus was a major prophet from God. After all the bloodshed, the killing of millions in recent centuries within Christendom, which had finally reduced the voice of those who questioned the divinity of Christ to a whisper, now there was this threat of a new monotheist religion, stating that Jesus was from God, not of God, that mankind had raised him to a divine stature which he had never claimed.

The fury of the Eastern and Western Christian Churches at this new threat to the newly dominant doctrine of Trinity was beyond description. They must do anything and everything to crush this new menace to Trinity, wipe out this new religion by any means available. By now, the Christian clergy themselves had absorbed many popular legends and folklore of European pagan mythology into Christianity, to make it more popular. With belief in the maxim that *the end justifies the means*, the Church had allowed European folklore to be even treated as vaguely historical. Even centuries later, after the spread of literacy, fantasy and history often merged in Europe. In what was to become Britain, for instance, myths such as Saint George and the Dragon, the Blarney Stone, the Leprechauns, Robin Hood, King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, the Holy Grail were gradually changed from fables to almost history.

In Europe of the seventh century, therefore, with its beliefs in monsters, dragons, and pagan mythology, wild gossip against Islam was instantly believed. Stories soon abounded that Islam's founder called Muhammad (variously spelt) had horns; his head was below his shoulders; some said this monster claimed to be God himself. Later, (as Prof. Buckle reports) the most kindly rumor which was believed as late as the 17th century by even some respected European "historians" of the time was that Muhammad had been a cardinal who wished to become pope, and angrily started a new religion because he was denied the papal throne!

But it was not only Christians who were furious at Muhammad's claim to divine revelations that told him Jesus was not Son of God but a great prophet sent by God.. Judaic priests and all of the Old Testament books claimed God was the personal God of the Hebrews. In the later books of the Old Testament, there were occasional passing references to God's concern for the billions of other humans He had created, but He was primarily interested in the welfare of the Hebrews, His Chosen People always, through the centuries. At times Judaic priests had a difficult time to explain why God had created these other billions of people who apparently lived and died without His directives. The Bible said God had even instructed Joshua, the leader of the Jews after Moses, to simply kill the entire populace of Canaan (Palestine) to make room for the Jews. Why on earth would He now be honoring this illiterate Arab in the Arabian desert with direct revelations? The answer was clear. Muhammad was a fake.

Ironically, Jews were to change their minds about Muslims in less than a century, when Muslims came into Spain and saved them from extinction. Jews then became devout, sincere friends of Muslims for a thousand years and were given recognition and status in the Muslim world that was the dominant world entity. Then the Christian world became dominant in the world and the current Judeo-Christian combine gradually came into being.

## Chapter 2

# Islam: The New Doctrinaire Enemy

(1)

During the early Christian (pre-Islamic) era, the Middle and Near East (to employ the Eurocentric terms we use today) were also in an incessant state of warfare. These were the older advanced societies, known from earliest recorded times as far more "civilized" than the primitive societies of Europe. Even hostilities between tribes were more complex through alliances with the Big Powers of the time, the New Romans (of the Byzantine Empire) and the Persians.

The Fertile Crescent, from northern Syria to the Nile Valley, had been at the center of much that was the core of history from earliest recorded times. Hammurabi, King of Babylon (now Iraq) in 18th century B.C., had formulated the first comprehensive legal system from which much of present-day law in even the Western world is derived. After Zarathustra, Akhenaton, who was Pharaoh of Egypt in the 14th century B.C., is the first known promulgator of monotheism. Great civilizations and empires developed and were, in their turn conquered and replaced by others. Peoples and cultures overlapped. The Semites (the word coined by German historian and linguist Schlozein in the 18th century) used the languages found in Mesopotamia, Syria, the Arabian peninsular and North Africa: to the religions, they were identified as the descendants of Shem, the eldest son of Noah. The non-Semitic, advanced Sumerians ruled Syria from about 3500 B.C. to 2500 B.C., until the Semitic Amorites defeated them; Babylonians were followed by Egyptians, overpowered by the Hittites from Asia Minor in about 1450 B.C., returned to battle for supremacy.

While this struggle for dominance went on, the Canaanites were the established citizenry of Syria and Palestine from about 1600 B.C. onwards. They were skilled workers, themselves a mixture of various ethnics over the centuries, and they were joined a few centuries later by the Phoenicians, seafarers and gifted

traders who were among the first to explore and create colonies for trade (not for conquests) by the sea route all across southern Europe and the African coast (some claim, to the "New" World as well). They made famous the cities of Carthage, Tare and Sidon, and are the direct ancestors of present-day Syrians.

By 1200 B.C., the Atamans invaded and gained control over Damascus and it was their language - Aramaic - that gradually became the most prevalent, and would, eventually be the language that Jesus spoke. The Hebrews, after leaving Egypt came about another century later, invaded and conquered Canaan where the *Falastin* (Palestinians) lived and conducted massacres. Conquests and reconquests followed in "the land of milk and honey". The Assyrians came, their empire lasted over a period of about two hundred years. The Chaldeans defeated the Assyrians, their King Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem in 597 B.C. In the meanwhile, Persia, a "Superpower" of the time, became even more powerful under Cyrus the Great, uniting the Medes and the Persians in an empire, which stretched from the Aegean Sea and the borders of Egypt to the Indus Valley in India. His successors then conquered Egypt in 525 B.C., making the Persians masters of virtually the entire civilized world west of the Chinese Empire. The next major force to hit the area was the extraordinary conquests by Alexander of Macedon some two hundred years later. He created blood ties with the Persians, extended his empire from the city-states of Greece to northern India by 326 B.C. before his death at the early age of 33. The imprint of Hellenism survived longer than his empire. After all, historically, Greece was still very much a part of the "Eastern" civilization, and it would be many centuries before the "West" would insist Greece was the crucible of "Western civilization." In Egypt, the city of Alexandria excelled as an intellectual center with its magnificent library and literary explorations of all Eastern civilizations. Persia itself, after Alexandria's conquest and his own desire to merge Persian and Hellenic civilizations, was for centuries to be under considerable Hellenic influence, as was Syria, and soon even the upper classes among the Hebrews were to come under Hellenic influence, while their poor remained fiercely faithful to Judaism. About a century after Alexander, however, came the Romans, more skilled in warfare and governance than in art and culture, but with a unique ability to imitate. After finally defeating Carthage in 211 B.C., and thereby gaining control over the western Mediterranean, Rome invaded Greece, while the Greco-Persian and the Ptolemaic Egyptians were each other out in battles. Anarchy, dissipation and civil wars delayed the Romans for a while, but the triumvirate of Pompey, Caesar and Cassius took power, and while Caesar took time to bring within the empire some of the backwaters of northern Europe — Germany and Britain — Pompey established Roman control in Asia Minor and the Eastern Mediterranean, conquering Syria and Jerusalem. But the Zoroastrian Persians inflicted a severe defeat upon the Romans and took Syria and Jerusalem, until Octavius (Emperor Augustus), shortly before the birth of Jesus, in a succession of victories, established Roman rule over Egypt and Asia Minor. Persia remained independent as Augustus felt it was too dangerous to challenge again.



Pagan Rome rose to great heights in administration, then to dissipation and decline, while Christianity, despite the brutal intolerance it faced at the start in the Empire, gained grounds. As early as the first century A.D., it had arrived in Egypt through Mark and spread rapidly among the poor. For three centuries Christianity remained a minority religion, while the Roman Empire slowly weakened through tribal invasions, but was periodically resuscitated. Contrary to the image, which would be established in the 19th and 20th century, the Roman emperors were *not* all Latins. In fact, Syrians not only became prominent lawyers, historians, artists and administrators in Rome, but even *emperors*, such as the emperor known in history as Philip "the Arab." The Church at Antioch along with that in Alexandria had superior status *because they represented superior, advanced societies*. When tribal warfare and invasions by northern tribes tore southern Europe apart, Constantine emerged not only to crush the northern tribes but decided to support the Roman Church over the equally popular worship of Isis and much earlier Mithras Church. As a result not only did Constantine use the sword to massacre the followers of Isis and Mithras, but raised the importance of the Christian bishop of Rome to equal status as the bishops of Antioch and Alexandria and then to even greater power. As we have seen, a grateful pope crowned him the first Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Constantine created Constantinople as the new capital and the center of his Empire. This led to rivalry between the Eastern and Western Roman empires, as there was between the Western and Eastern Church. In the meanwhile, in Persia, the descendants of the Sassanid rulers, Cyrus and Darius, had replaced the Parthian rulers. Shapur I took the title of Shah-e-Shah (King of Kings). For two hundred years, the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire managed to hold the Persians at bay, even as the Western Roman Empire collapsed. But by 616 A.D., the Persians had conquered Egypt and Asia Minor and were attacking Constantinople, yet Emperor Heraclius managed to hold on to his vast boundaries. Both superpowers used minor client states between them to remain the superpower in the world.

Constantinople used Christianity in its power play through its client states. The Mimir kingdom resisted Christianity pressed upon them by the Asumites (a Byzantine satellite) and added insult to injury by accepting Judaism rather than submit to the Christianity of the Asumites. In the ensuing war (about 523 AD) the Mimirites not only defeated the Asumites but burnt many of them alive and demolished their churches. So Abyssinia (the first kingdom to have officially converted to Christianity) launched a crusade against the Mimirites killing their king Dhu-Nuwas. The Asumite general, Abraha, was renowned as a warrior and conqueror, and Byzantine Emperor Justinian dubbed him "The Christian Champion" and felt the time was ripe to use him to extend his empire. With Abyssinian forces under his command, Abraha even invaded pre-Muslim Mecca in 570 AD, about the time Prophet Muhammad was born. "The invasion failed; probably pestilence destroyed the bulk of [Abraha's] Abyssinian forces and saved the city. Abraha did not long survive this setback" writes Prof. J.J. Saunders in *A History of Medieval Islam*<sup>1</sup> There were other powerful tribes (client-states), such as the Lakmids and

the Banu-Ghassids, the former of the Persians, the latter of Constantinople. Abraha was wooed by Byzantine Emperor Justinian to help him fight the Persians. While their masters eventually swallowed up several tribes who participated in the incessant wars of the New Romans and the Persians, Abyssinia and Armenia emerged as states, aiding the Byzantine Empire in its wars of conquest. Hostilities and warfare in the Middle East became more frequent.

It is with an understanding of the fiery turbulence of the time that the early history of Islam should be appraised. It is critical also to understand the conditions within Mecca itself when Muhammad was born in 570 A.D., the year Abraha and the Abyssinian forces invaded Mecca but failed to conquer it.

## (2)

The Meccans of the time were an extremely licentious and barbaric community, though relatively prosperous as trade routes passed through the city, and because of a religious shrine in the city, which housed 360 idols revered by the Arabs. Historians agree that they treated women as chattels and with such brutality that by the six century A.D., couples were apt to kill or bury alive their female children at birth rather than face the agonies which such parenting often wrought.

The ruling Ummayyad family of Mecca was in charge of the religious shrine and its 360 idols. Muhammad was born to the Hashemites, a prominent branch of the Ummayyads. When therefore he commenced to preach belief in One God, prayers, fasting, charity, piety, he faced the rage of the Meccan people and even greater fury of his own kin who were in charge of the official pagan religion and its idols. He had revelations from Archangel Gabriel, he said. "Like many of the Jewish prophets, however, Muhammad was sometimes very cautious about the Voice and the presence that came to him more and more frequently. Was it really God or the product of his own imagination? Finally he was convinced of their divine nature. " 'Never once did I receive a revelation without thinking that my soul had been torn away from me' he said at the end of his life" writes Armstrong.<sup>2</sup> The Qur'an (the compilations of these revelations to Muhammad) referred to Christians and Jews as "the people of the Book" (the Bible), said their prophets were true prophets, that it was incumbent upon all Muslims to believe in those prophets as well as Muhammad who was the last of the prophets, that the Virgin Birth of Jesus to Mary was true. But it also said that humans had changed some aspects of those earlier (Biblical) revelations, and the Qur'an must never be changed in any way. Muhammad taught that Islam, which means submission (to God) "was the ultimate revelation of the Jewish-Christian tradition." The followers of Islam were Muslims (those who submit to God). "Abraham ...had been the first 'Muslim' because he had submitted so perfectly to God; he had been neither Jew nor Christian because he had lived long before the Torah and the gospels (Koran 3:66-69)" writes Armstrong.

Muhammad was physically attacked, survived murder plots. But conversion grew fast, especially among young men and woman. Appalled at this, "The Meccans

began to prosecute the Muslims. In particular those Muslims who were slaves and women were subjected to torture and to inhuman treatment," says Armstrong.<sup>3</sup> That did not work.

The conversions to Islam kept growing, and the Qureish found their trade being seriously affected, and likely to suffer more if their own importance as the keepers of the Meccan idols was further eroded. They now offered Muhammad the position of chieftain of Mecca if he would reject his religion. He refused. So physical assaults against him began again. After escaping the most recent assassination attempt, he moved with his followers to Yathrib (renamed Medina "the city"), insisted on being the last but one to leave, regrouped there with his growing flock. It was 622 A.D. This was to become the first year of the Muslim calendar. "The Meccans were trying to spread hostility against Muslims in Medina and were using their trade caravans as a means of inciting the neighboring tribes and the Jews to fight against the city [Medina]... Mohammed realized that the Muslims would have to fight them if they wanted to survive...[but] Muslims were forbidden to open hostilities: 'Fight for the sake of Allah those that fight against you, but do not attack them first. Allah does not love the aggressor' (Koran 2:191)" reports Armstrong.<sup>4</sup> The next Meccan caravan came accompanied by a very large military force, probably as protection against raids (*razzia*), which were so common at the time. The Muslims took to battle, and despite the overwhelming odds, the Muslims won. "Inevitably the Meccans sent armies against the Medina and for the next four years there were battles in which Medina [the Muslims] emerged the stronger power." These victories convinced the Muslims, as the Israelites had been, that God was with them. Hostility towards the Muslims, however, did not come only from the Meccans. "Mohammed had not only to fight the Meccans but also the Jewish tribes in the area and Christian tribes in Syria who planned an offensive against him in alliance with the Jews. When Mohammed sent his freedman Zaid against the Christians at the head of an army, he told them to fight in the cause of God bravely but humanely. They must not molest priests, monks and nuns or the weak and helpless people who were unable to fight. There must be no massacre of civilians nor should they cut down a single tree or pull down any building. *This was very different from the wars of Joshua*," says Armstrong.<sup>5</sup>

But now the Meccans agreed to a treaty that allowed Muslims to visit Mecca for pilgrimage. The Qur'an had revealed that this pilgrimage was compulsory for all Muslims who could afford it because the shrine in Mecca, now a pagan home of 360 idols, was in fact the original house, which Abraham had built as a house of God.

Muhammad went with a large army of Muslim pilgrims to Mecca for the Hajj in 628 AD. "It was an unusual army because the soldiers were virtually unarmed and carried only swords, which Muhammad had ordered to remain sheathed," writes Armstrong.<sup>6</sup> At Mecca Muhammad announced that by the Treaty of Hudaibiyya, the Muslims were allowed to make the pilgrimage. The Meccans withdrew and allowed the pilgrimage. But the next year, "the Meccans foolishly broke the treaty...[they] attacked the tribe of Khuza'a...The Koran insists that

whenever the enemy wants to make peace Muslims *must* enter into a treaty, provided the terms are not dangerous to Islam" says Armstrong. But now the Meccans had broken the treaty so Muhammad could act freely. The following year, at Hajj, Muhammad went with an armed force to Mecca, and asked the Meccans to surrender. "There would be no bloodshed and no reprisals. No Meccans would be forced to convert to Islam. He [Mohammed] would only smash the idols in the Ka'aba. The Meccans agreed and the Muslims honored the conditions of the agreement," says Armstrong.<sup>7</sup>

Muhammad personally destroyed the 360 idols housed in the Ka'aba. He proclaimed that the Ka'aba, in fact, was the original House of God built by Abraham, the common ancestor of the Jews and the Arabs, which over the centuries, had been desecrated through ignorance with idols. While he destroyed the 360 idol statues, he spared the lives of the defeated Meccans. Even the Umayyads converted — some from belief, others from expediency — to Islam.

### (3)

The Qur'an specifically orders that religion cannot be forced upon anyone: "*La Iqrahafiddin*" ("There is no compulsion in religion") and *Lakum deen-e-kum walaye deen*" (Qur'an 109:6; "Your religion with you, mine with me"). But there is the very clear directive in Islam: *Naheeanil munkar* (combat evil). The Muslim must stand up to evil to be closer to God, not run from it (during the Hajj pilgrimage, part of the ritual includes the ceremonial stoning of the devil).

It is important to review the fundamental facts about Islam and the conditions that prevailed in those early days of its introduction. In Christendom, by the seventh century A.D., the mass killing of the opposition had finally resulted in the general acceptance of the Holy Trinity and the divinity of Jesus Christ. Now this new religion from Arabia had risen to provide even greater problems. It did not reject Jesus Christ. The Muslim accepted all the prophets sent by God, believed that every community in the world had been sent prophets; all the prophets from Adam and Noah down through the prophets of Judea to Jesus Christ must be believed in as genuine prophets. However, Judaic-Christian belief said God had chosen the Israelis as "His people" was wrong, it was from false conceit and the Jews would be punished for it. No race, nation, color was superior to any other in the sight of God. The Qur'an ordered respect for the prophets who had come to the world from the Judaic tribe, but the Qur'an said that while Isaac, the son of Abraham (Ibrahim) through Sarah, was a prophet, so was Ishmael (Ismail), Abraham's older son through Hagar, that Abraham had allowed the banishment of Hagar and her infant because his wife Sarah demanded it. Had God not sent an angel to find water for Hagar and Ishmael, they would have died (the waters of Zam-Zam well found miraculously by the angel still exist, next to the Ka'aba and are sacred to Muslims). Abraham did visit Hagar and Ishmael in the desert, built the house of God (the Ka'aba) on the same site where Adam had first built it. And Muhammad was a direct descendant of Ishmael, therefore from the seed of Abraham. The Qur'an said Jesus was of



Immaculate Conception, a great prophet who performed great miracles, was brutalized by his own people who had gone completely astray under their priests into believing God belonged only to them, but God had saved Jesus just before his crucifixion. Virgin Mary was particularly praised in the Qur'an. And it said the Scriptures given to the Judaic tribe were authentic revelations from God, but had been changed in parts by humans to serve their own ends. Humans will never be able to do that to the Qur'an, it says.

The Oneness, the Unity of One God, was at the core of the Islamic faith. Islam (the word meant peace, and the acquisition of that peace through the *conscious* surrender of the human *free* will to Allah) enjoined specific prayers, fasting, charity, pilgrimage to Mecca (to the Ka'aba, and the site where first Adam, then Abraham had built a house of worship). And it stressed the need to acquire knowledge. Illiterate Muhammad said this often as a requirement for all Muslim men and women ("one learned believer is harder on the devil than a thousand ignorant worshippers" he said). And knowledge must be sought and acquired everywhere. "Seek knowledge even if it be in China" he said. And he stressed that the *Greater Jihad* (Holy War) was not fought against others but within one's individual self, against the evil within, until the day one dies.

These directives led the mainly illiterate Arab tribes, after conversion, to secular and esoteric learning. Muhammad's own cousin and son-in-law Ali became renowned for his many sermons and letters regarding the philosophy of Islam. Many of his collected 480 sermons, his writings and letters were traced and collected by various scholars, compiled into a compendium called *Nahjul Balagha*, later translated into English and other languages. In the first two sermons, Ali talks about the origin of creation, the formation of gases, and their condensation. Sadly, however, the following incredible paragraph from among Ali's many treatise on the subject of knowing God, is generally unknown even to Shia Muslims. In fact, it has been discarded casually even from the Introductory sections in some editions of the *Na'jul Balagha*, the compendium of Ali's sermons, letters, speeches, as merely one more of his many utterances regarding the concept of God:

God is not like any object that the human mind can conceive. No attributes can be ascribed to Him that bear the least resemblance to any quality which human minds know from their material existence...[But] piety requires we truly know God... and perfect awareness of God is to deny all attributes to Him. He who applies an attribute to God believes that attribute to be God, and he who so believes regards God as two or part of one. He who asks where God is, assimilates Him with some object. God is the creator, not because He Himself was created... He has no physical relation to matter, time, and space. God is Omniscient because knowledge is His Essence, He is loving because love is His Essence, He is forgiving because forgiveness is His Essence. It is not because these are attributes apart from His Essence.

Sadly, the implications of the basic tenets of Islam are seldom highlighted or understood the way they should be. For instance, Islam requires the surrender of the *free* will to God. *Each time one goes into Sejdah (prostration) in prayer, one is physically reaffirming that surrender of the free will to God.* Therefore, jealousy is inherently *anti-Islamic*, because each individual must (a) accept what God has given him/her by way of intelligence, talents, looks, and (b) recognize the *obligation* and *burden* placed upon those endowed with superior intelligence and other qualities to use them in the service of God — "from those to whom much is given, much is required." In keeping with this perspective, the danger of "Shirk" (giving equal status as the One True God to anyone or anything) is a terrible sin. Therefore the Greater Jihad is the Jihad we must fight against the evil within ourselves at all times. Obsessive love for worldly possessions is "Shirk." If love of one's own family exceeds one's love of God, that is *Shirk*. Even charity or good deeds performed to gain a good reputation can be *Shirk*. The word *Huq* occurs in the Qur'an many times. At times, it refers to God, at other times, to truth, justice, the righteous way. The knowledgeable should see this as a clear indication that God, Truth, Justice, Righteous Way are One, *indivisible*. There are other words in the Qur'an with implications that must be understood e.g., the word *Husn*, which is used in the Qur'an for "beauty" at times and for "goodness" in others. Ergo, beauty cannot be beauty in the real sense without goodness. Because human free will faces such challenges, Islam stresses that the human being can rise to levels above the angels or sink below the level of the lowest animals, depending on his/her free choice.

As we shall see later, over time, especially after terror and the unending tragedies from the horrors of the Crusades and the Mongol holocausts drove Muslims to abandon their passionate, pioneering pursuit of knowledge, of learning about past cultures; foreign invasions from the Mongols and the Crusaders led to paranoia, fears that God must be angry with their wide pursuit of knowledge and might prefer that they concentrate instead upon a literal interpretation of Qur'anic directives. *The critical importance of love for humanity steadily lost the importance it had; with more catastrophes and hardships over the centuries under colonial domination, theologians emphasized the daily compulsory directives of Islam and love for the Divine, but love and compassion for humanity, while still expressed in the abstract, steadily lost the emphasis it once had for the average Muslim.* Ironically, after Reformation in Christianity that love for humanity that Jesus had stressed was given more importance than it had ever been given in the early centuries.

However, the directive in Islam that piety and goodness are the criterion for God's favor, not skin color or ethnicity, remained of paramount importance through future centuries. Even in his farewell address after *Haji* in 632 AD (when he announced he would die soon) Muhammad reiterated "all men are equal before Allah, without distinction of social class or racial origin," reports Armstrong.<sup>8</sup> And, to ensure that Arabs did not consider themselves as the Chosen People, as the Jews had done, he cautioned that an Arab is not to see himself as superior to a non-Arab. Superiority between humans comes from nothing except devotion to God. *The noblest amongst you in the sight of Allah is the most devout* (Qur'an 49:13).

Much is made, usually accompanied by ridicule, of the fact that the Qur'an refers to the earlier Judaic prophets and their lives. The inference, usually explicit, is that Muhammad heard stories about the Jewish religion and merely copied them, often getting them inaccurate in details. Only a little impartial thought reveals the bigotry involved here. For one thing, if the earlier Judaic prophets were true and did exist, would not the *same* God reaffirm that reality in subsequent revelations? And if, as is claimed, Muhammad merely got the stories about the Old Testament prophets from some Jewish source, and used them, why would he, by every account very intelligent though illiterate, not take the simple precaution to get these stories exactly as in the Old Testament? Why would he make the deliberate and extremely explosive contention that Jesus was a major prophet not Son of God? Why not simply *avoid* the issue? If he meant to please the Jews, *why does the Qur'an glorify Virgin Mary so much? Why insist she was a Virgin and the birth of Jesus an Immaculate Conception?* Why, if he was merely ambitious, did he refuse leadership offered by pagan Arab chieftains if he gave up Islam? Why put horrendous conditions as obligatory in Islam, such as total prohibition of alcohol in a society plunged in drunkenness? Why place prayers *five times*, every day, the first one before daybreak? And why a whole month of fasting, without food or drink, sunrise to sunset, in the heat-wave conditions of the deserts?

Western scholars have shown very many inconsistencies in the Bible, in the Old and New Testaments. And some have written volumes to show that much of the Old Testament is copied from *pagan* sources. Also, as we have seen, there is an uncanny resemblance between some Old Testament psalms and the few of Egypt's Akhenaton's much earlier psalms that survived subsequent burning. Lloyd M. Graham in *Deceptions and Myths of the Bible* (Citadel Press, New Jersey, 1975)<sup>9</sup> claims that (1) the account of Adam and Eve and Eden is taken from Babylonian stories; (2) Moses is taken from the Syrian Moses (3) Noah's Flood, the Ark and Ararat are all taken from Deluge mythologies of the past; (4) Judaic laws are taken from Hammurabi's Code (5) Isaac's sacrifice and Solomon's judgment are all copies from earlier tales.

And, we have seen, there are many remarkable similarities, including birthday, teachings, virgin birth, resurrection of Persian icon Mithra, who was worshipped even in Europe until Constantine's times. Does that raise doubts about the authenticity of Jesus' story? *It does not.* It is clear that the Church decided to identify Jesus' birthday with Mithra, who was still worshipped in Europe and in Asia even before Zarathustra. The fact that Jesus' birth and teaching was so similar to that earlier prophet born in Persia does not mean that the story of Jesus is a myth created to imitate Mithra. *The simple fact is, if Mithra was a genuine prophet of God, would not his teachings be similar to those of Jesus later, also sent by the same God?*

As to the similarities of Old Testament stories to those in "pagan" times could that not simply be that so-called "pagan" stories were *authentic accounts now given Jewish names?* Would not Muhammad's accounts be similar to those of earlier prophets? *Why are Judeo-Christians so determined to believe that while*

*God created all humankind, He would not offer similar directions to all as He gave the Jews?*

Once Muhammad was convinced himself that the revelations to him were in fact from God, he realized it as his duty to proclaim his message to the world and the fact that these revelations also said mankind had misinterpreted some earlier revelations. In time, the deep faith of the believers translated, as new religious fervor usually does, into a passion to communicate the Good News to the world and fury when they found that there were many who instantly condemned the new revelations as spurious, and sought to crush this new religion at its source.

"Mohammed had to fight not only the Meccans but also the Jewish tribes in the area and Christian tribes in Syria who planned an offensive against him in alliance with the Jews...when Mohammed sent his freedman Zaid against the Christians at the head of a Muslim army, he told them to fight in the cause of God bravely but humanely. They must not molest priests, monks, and nuns or the weak and helpless people who were unable to fight. There must be no massacre of civilians nor should they cut down a single tree or pull down any building ... the Koran insists that whenever the enemy wants to make peace, Muslims *must* enter into a treaty, *provided that the terms are not dangerous to Islam*," writes Armstrong.<sup>10</sup>

#### (4)

It is clear that, from the start, the enemies of Islam made little or no effort to learn what Islam was, even its basic tenets. Knowing that if it is seriously examined, the recent acceptance of the doctrine of Trinity would once again be questioned, Christian clerics led others to make up wild stories about Islam, (which millions in the West actually believed then and for centuries thereafter). Even the more sober chose not to learn facts about the religion but sought to dig up whatever they could to condemn it. We need not waste time with the wild irresponsible tales, just examine the most frequently criticized practices, which *are* based on a modicum of truth.

Why did Muslims take slaves, even cohabit with them? Some Muslims point to the primitive, almost savage times. How could the extremely wild practices of the time be ended overnight? There *had* to be a transitory period before slavery of any type could be exterminated. Recall that Hebrew prophets had themselves not only permitted slaves but had *owned* them, that many had more than once wives; that Solomon had many wives; that pagan temples had not been rejected overnight in Judah and Israel, that popes had even *permitted* pagan practices to return even in Rome. If Judaic prophets had been guided by God to choose this gradual route, why could that same God not have directed an even milder transition for the establishment of Islam among an entirely barbaric and pagan community of Arabs? And, most of all, what about that permission to have up to four wives? And why did Muhammad himself marry so often? But then, *why did Solomon marry 700 women?* Why did God choose the stuttering Moses who, the Bible says, killed a man in a private quarrel, as a major prophet to lead the Jews? Why did God chose David who commit adultery with Bathsheba,



then hired another soldier to kill Uriah so he could marry Bathsheba? Why did Lot offer his virgin daughters to the men of Sodom to cure them of their unnatural acts? How could God allow his prophet Lot to then be raped by his own daughters, as the Old Testament says he was? Why did God order Onan to make love to his dead brother's wife to get her pregnant and, when the reluctant Onan ejaculated at the last moment on the ground instead, was God so angry at this that he killed Onan? Yet, this is what the Old Testament (in Genesis and Samuels II) tells us clearly and a lot more. *A lot more can be listed in the same vein if one wished to be destructively critical.*

Now consider some frequent criticism directed at Islam. Why were Muslims instructed initially to pray facing Jerusalem and later asked to face the Ka'aba instead? The answer is simple. The Ka'aba needed first to be purified of the idols placed there over the centuries, before Muslims were directed to face it. *God wanted this new direction of worship to make Islam distinct from the earlier revelations, just as Jesus had been asked to have his followers change the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday.* In fact, if our egocentric little minds can grasp the reality that God is the Creator and that we are the created who may not always understand eternal mysteries, then a lot falls into place. For reasons, which we may never understand, God chose to make revelations *organically*, from one period of time to the next, not in absolutes. If all His directives were absolute and for all times, never to change, then each of the Hebrew prophets and Jesus Christ were at fault in not rigidly following everything preached before them.

Why did God not endow Muhammad with miraculous powers? Jesus was mystical, endowed with powers to perform extraordinary miracles to make a dent in the rigid, corrupt bureaucracy that the priests had made in Israel. Despite these miracles, he failed to convert most of the Hebrews, even though they had been monotheist, familiar with God's messages. *The primitive Arabs would have quickly killed an intensely other-worldly Muhammad performing miracles, or installed him as another deity in the Ka'aba.* In this context, non-Muslim critics seem to overlook a simple fact when evaluating the Qur'an. *It was worded for primitive Arabs of fourteen centuries ago. Repetition, simple imagery, even the exotic concept of Heaven had to that which made appealed to them. It worked, miraculously, so well that these barbaric people became not only believers in One God, but prayed five times a day, gave up drinking, wild sexual excesses, gave to the poor — all this in one generation.*

The pagan Arabs of the time had practiced not only indiscriminate sexual mating but treated women as such contemptible objects that many parents preferred to kill their newborn female infants rather than have them face the life they would have. Islam banned fornication and restricted marriage to four wives. The first wife must give permission for another marriage. And marriage to four is permitted only if each and every one is treated exactly the same. *Could such perfectly equal treatment be possible unless these additional marriages were mainly for the support of widows and orphans?* All sources agree that Muhammad had tremendous respect for women; he stood up every time a woman entered a room, even his daughter. One of his

famous directives was "It is the duty of every Muslim man and woman to acquire knowledge." There were many others from this illiterate prophet, e.g. (1) the ink of the doctor is as valuable as the blood of the martyr. (2) Paradise is as much for him who has rightly used his pen as for him who has rightly used the sword.

The Qur'anic permission to have up to four wives was revealed after the battle of Ohad, in which a great many men of the small Muslim community were killed, leaving behind widows and little children. Some Muslims believe that this permission was intended *only* for that period, not for all times. Those who believe this permission was for all time point to the degenerate and indiscriminate sex in other cultures today, officially "monogamous", but where divorces and remarriage are so prevalent (causing one Western wit to say that it is polygamy on an installment plan). They point also to the practice of polygamy among that most strictly religious Christian community, the Mormons, the Seventh-Day Adventists, whose founder John Smith insisted that polygamy was right, practiced it himself, suffering greatly as a result in the United States of the 19th century.

Why did Muhammad himself marry some nine times? Muslim theologians point to the fact that he had just one wife until she died when he was in his fifties, that he married several widows, that he married also to extend the influence of Islam among a variety of important segments of society. This explanation does not satisfy those who insist upon the same rules for prophets and the rest of us. Others say there are divine directives at times beyond our logic. *Where did Lilith, Adam's first wife, come from? Was Cain's wife his sister? If not, where did she come from? Why was Solomon allowed to have hundreds of wives? Why are his Songs so erotic? If the Bible is true, why did God permit Prophet Lot to be raped by his own daughters?*

Muslims consider it ultimate hypocrisy for Christendom to take a holier-than-thou attitude on matters of sex, when its history reeks of the worst forms of sexual depravities, increasing by the year, in addition to the practice of polygamy and polyandry at least on the installment plan. Paradoxically, Christians have deep-seated hang-ups about sex, perhaps from the earliest times when many popes and senior clergy had harems of wives and concubines. The doctrine, proclaimed by the Church said, "Man is conceived in sin and born into corruption." Yet sex was practiced *within* the Church by priests at the highest level, in the sleaziest forms.

In Islam, while sex outside of marriage is forbidden, the Qur'an itself says it is one of God's bounties to be enjoyed in its legal form and not to be looked upon as ugly or dirty. However, Muslims too have abused their privileges. Many men have had innumerable wives and concubines. Also, despite the directive "*La Ibrahahideen*" ("there is no compulsion in religion") some Muslim conquerors were brutal to non-Muslims. Some even converted by force. These evil acts are dumped on Islam by the West even though it clearly condemns them. *The accusation is as unfair as saying that every act of every sleazy pope through the ages, of every Hitler, Mussolini, of every corrupt king, prime minister and president, follow Jesus Christ's teachings.*

Educated skeptics are surprised to find that the Qur'an contains facts which neither the Old or New Testament contain, indeed facts which were unknown to the world until centuries later; for instance the Qur'an says that the human body is made up principally of water. Just where could Muhammad have stolen that from, over 1,400 years ago? In *The Bible, Qur'an and Science*, (Seghers, Paris, 1986) French scholar Dr. Maurice Bucaille provides many examples of Qur'anic verses consistent with scientific findings of today and compares that with the many inconsistencies between the Bible and Science. "The totally erroneous statements made about Islam in the West are sometimes the result of ignorance, and sometimes of systematic denigration" says Bucaille. "It is disturbing to read blatant untruths in eminently respectable works written by authors who *a priori* are highly qualified."<sup>11</sup>

## (5)

At Muhammad's death (approx. 632 A.D.) the elderly Abu Bakr became first Caliph (the vicegerent) till his death two years later. At this early stage, the fledgling Muslim nation found itself forced into battle on three fronts. When Abu Bakr sent forces against the Persians in what is now Iraq, against the Romans in Palestine, a third against the Syrians, he followed the Prophet's standard orders: the voluntary army was "to do no harm to women, children and old people, to refrain from pillage and the destruction of crops, fruit trees, flocks and herds, and to leave in peace such Christian monks and anchorites as might be found in their cells" write Prof. J.J. Saunders (*A History of Medieval Islam*).<sup>12</sup> In explaining how the extremely barbaric and violent Arab tribes had been converted so quickly to practice such reticence in battle, Saunders writes "He (Muhammad) never countenanced the forcible conversion of Christians and Jews, and laid down as a principle that 'there is no compulsion in religion', in consequence of which Islam has been, on the whole, one of the most tolerant of creeds"<sup>13</sup>. Prof. Stephen Runciman in *A History of the Crusades* (3 volumes, Cambridge University Press, 1951) reports that brutalities practiced by the established Church against all Christians who were Copts, Neophysite and Nestorians led these Christians and Jews to favor Muslim rule over that of Christians as the Catholic and Orthodox Churches crushed them as well as "pagans".

In Africa, as in Europe, denominational warfare among Christians was rampant. Count Boniface invited Vandal King Generic to Africa to save the thousands of Arian Christian priests being persecuted there at the orders of the Byzantine Emperor. After Generic's conquest, the Catholics now appealed for help from persecution. Emperor Justinian, who despised Greek philosophers (Aristotle and Plato in particular, it is reported) closed the schools of philosophy in Athens, captured the Eternal City five times, removed the Roman Senate, and his general Belisarius re-conquered Northern Africa in 533 A.D. His fierce campaigns cost innumerable lives. "The human race was visibly diminished [under Justinian]" by an incredible number of one hundred million," writes Prof. Draper.<sup>14</sup> Centurion Phocas whose rule "was savage and incompetent" followed Emperor Justinian.

He slaughtered many Jacobites (in Syria) and Nestorians who tried to hold a Council at Antioch. Jews aided him, but "two years later the Jews themselves rose, and tortured and slew the Orthodox Patriarch in the city [Antioch]." Khosro of Persia whose wife Meryam was a Nestorian Christian, launched a war against the Eastern Roman Empire which lasted nineteen years. Khosro captured Antioch in 611 A.D., Damascus in 613 A.D. In the spring of 614 A.D. Khosro's General Shahrbaraz "entered Palestine, pillaging the countryside and burning churches as he went... On 5th of May, with the help of Jews within the walls, the Persians forced their way into the city [Jerusalem]. There followed scenes of utter horror. With their churches and houses in flames around them, the Christians were indiscriminately massacred, some by Persian soldiery and many more by the Jews. Sixty thousand were said to have perished and thirty-five thousand sold into slavery... the devastation in and around the city was so vast that to this day the countryside has never fully recovered... the part played by the Jews was never forgotten or forgiven Jews and had even expelled them from Jerusalem" writes Runciman.<sup>15</sup>

Muslims had never forgotten that when Prophet Muhammad had sent an envoy inviting Byzantine Christian Emperor Heraclius to Islam, just as he had sent an envoy to invite the Persian monarch to Islam, both emperors had contemptuously torn up the epistle from Muhammad; Emperor Heraclius even had the Muslim envoy killed. The Byzantine armies were now assembled threateningly at the Muslim border with Heraclius' brother Theodore in command, clearly intent on invading Muslim lands. *Gibbon admits this*, but, as always, in words provocatively hostile towards Islam: "The murder of an envoy [sent by Muhammad to Heraclius' court] provided a decent pretence [to the Muslims] for invading, with three thousand soldiers, the territory of Palestine".<sup>16</sup>

Despite their huge advantage in numbers, the Byzantine armies were defeated. Tiberias, Baalbek, and Homs fell to the Muslims, followed by Damascus in 635. Syria fell like Palestine, with the help of local Christians and Jews. "The heretic Christians submitted to them [Muslims] without demur. The Jews gave them [Muslims] active help, serving as their guides."<sup>17</sup> Caesarea and Dara held out till 639. The Muslims had also defeated the huge Persian armies. "Their victory at Kadesiah in 637 gave them Iraq and a second victory next year in Nakhavend gave them the Iranian plateau. King Yazdegerd III, the last of the Sassanids, lingered on in Khorassan till 651. By then the Arabs had reached his eastern frontiers on the Oxus and the Afghan hills" writes Runciman (p.17, Vol. I).

It is seldom realized that the native Christian Copts of Egypt helped the Muslims in their conquest. "In December 639 A.D. the Moslem general 'Amr, with four thousand men, invaded Egypt. The governor Patriarch Cyrus of Alexandria, was a convert [to Orthodox Christianity] from Nestorianism and was the Emperor's chief supporter in his Monothelite doctrines, which he was determined to force on the unwilling [Christian] Copts. So hated was his rule that 'Amr had no difficulty in finding allies among the subjects" says Runciman. In February 641, Heraclius died, his wife Martina (she was also his niece) asked Cyrus [the governor of Alexandria] to sue for peace with the Muslims. "Amr agreed



and signed a treaty for the capitulation of Alexandria with Cyrus" (Runciman). But soon Martina was removed, and the new Byzantine government claimed it did not have to honor the treaty and started the war again. By 645 A.D., they were finally defeated. "The Coptic Patriarch Benjamin restored Alexandria to the hands of 'Amr... By the year 700 Roman Africa was in the hands of the Arabs. Eleven years later they occupied Spain. In the year 717 their empire stretched from the Pyrenees to central India" writes Runciman.<sup>18</sup>

"The Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch, Michael the Syrian writing five centuries later, in the days of the Latin kingdoms, reflected the old tradition of his people when he told that '*the God of vengeance, who alone is the Almighty... raised from the south the children of Ishmael to deliver us from the hands of the Romans*'. This deliverance, he added, 'was no light advantage to us.' The Nestorians echoed this sentiment. 'The hearts of the Christians' wrote an anonymous chronicler in *Chronicle of Seert pt. II, in Patrologia Orientalis vol. XIII* rejoiced at the domination of the Arabs - may God strengthen it and prosper it!" says Runciman, (italics added).<sup>19</sup>

"Even the orthodox, finding themselves spared the persecution that they had feared and paying taxes that, in spite of the *jizya* demanded from the Christians, were far lower than in Byzantine times, showed small inclination to question their destiny... Unlike the Christian Empire, which attempted to enforce religious uniformity on all its citizens — an ideal never realized... the Arabs, like the Persians before them, were prepared to accept religious minorities, provided they were People of the Book" "The Christians, together with the Zoroastrians and the Jews became *dhimmis*, or protected peoples," reports Runciman.<sup>20</sup>

Considering the size and expertise of the Major Powers against whom they battled, the Muslim victories were extraordinary. With the second Caliph Omar (634-644) as Caliph (after the elderly Abu Bakr died two years after becoming Caliph), Egypt and Syria were defeated but the rule set by Muhammad was followed. "The treaty which Khalid [Muslim general] concluded with the Damascenes is typical of the arrangements that were made by the score in many different lands during the next decade" writes Prof. Saunders, and then provides an English translation: "This is a treaty which Khalid bin Al Walid makes with the people of Damascus on his entry into the town. He assures to them their lives and their goods, their churches and the walls of their town. No house will be pulled down or taken away from its owner. To guarantee this, he takes God to witness and promises them the protection of his successors and the faithful. He will do no ill to them as long as they pay their tribute" Prof. Saunders adds "The native Syrians, Christians and Jews were freed from Orthodox prosecution, regained their religious liberty, and felt no desire for a restoration of imperial [Christian] rule. As a Nestorian bishop put it: 'The Arabs to whom God has in our day accorded the dominion, have become our masters, but they do not war against the Christian religion, rather they protect our faith, respect our priests and holy men, and make gifts to our churches and convents'" (italics added).<sup>21</sup>

The "New Romans" (as the Byzantine Christians were called) now tried something new, to woo Christians of other denominations. In 637 A.D., Heraclitus tried to win over the Monophysites (believers in One God, not the Trinity), while he sent an army against the "Ishmaelites" (the Muslims). But the long periods when Chalcedonians and the Monophysites along with the Copts and the Jacobites had been brutalized by the Orthodox and the Church of Rome, had caused great bitterness to develop against these rulers. There was also the bitterness between the Monophysites of Egypt, Syria, Armenia and the Nestorians of Iraq, now under Persian occupation. Historians agree that the population seeking redress from the horrors to which they had been subjected welcomed the Muslims in. The conquest of Egypt was very fast because of this and King Yazdegerd of Persia, planning an offensive against the Muslims, was taken unawares when the Muslim armies, after their swift Egyptian victories, turned to face him; he suffered several defeats, while fleeing with his forces back to Khurashan in Eastern Persia. By 642 A.D., the Arabs had taken all of the Persian Empire.

Ironically, the Muslim victory in Jerusalem was "in consequence, it was said, of the treachery of a Jew, who revealed to the [Muslims] besiegers an entrance through a disused aqueduct," says Prof. Saunders.<sup>22</sup> Just ten years earlier, the "New Romans" had captured Palestine from the "fire-worshipping" Persians who, historians say, destroyed the Christian churches and Jewish temples in Palestine (reportedly including the Temple of Solomon). The Muslims now began to build mosques, among them the Dome of the Rock, on the site where Solomon's temple had once stood. *It is reported that Caliph Omar expected that Christians and Jews would be very pleased to see a mosque of One God erected where previous places of worship to that One God had stood and had been destroyed by the Zoroastrians!*

## (6)

With astonishing speed, in less than a decade, the Muslim nation ruled much of the world. But there was corruption and dissensions, leading to a civil war. The third Caliph Othman (644-656) was killed. Then Ali, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law (who, according to Shias, should have been the first caliph) became caliph but he was killed in 661 while he was at prayer. The dissensions within the Muslim nation which had commenced after the death of Muhammad were now more pronounced than ever, leading soon to what is generally considered the most hideous crime in Muslim history — the isolation in a desert for three days without food or water by Caliph Yazid's army, of the Prophet's grandson Hussein and family (including other progeny of Muhammad), a total of 72 men, women and children. The males, even Hussein's six-month old son Asgar, were then killed, and the women paraded across the cities as captives "As the head of the Prophet's grandson was cast at the feet of the Viceroy [Ubaidallah] who turned it over with his stick, a shudder went through the crowd... the memory of the tenth of the month, Muharram of the 61 A.H. (Oct. 10, 680 A.D.) has never fallen into oblivion, and ... is commemorated with grief today by millions of Shi'ite Muslims" writes Saunders.<sup>23</sup>

But while there were the licentious and those yearning for conquests among caliphs in search of power (which created ongoing protestations from the more religious element), there were also to be, over the next centuries, caliphs of principle and of a world view, in keeping with Muhammad repeated directive that (a) Islam was for all people (b) the earlier Christian and Jewish prophets were from that One God and (c) "acquire knowledge even if it be in China." (d) "It is the duty of every Muslim man and woman to acquire knowledge," (e) "one learned believer is harder on the devil than a thousand ignorant worshippers." It was this firm directive towards knowledge that inspired Muslims to be pioneers of learning and discovery.

Clearly there were Muslim rulers who, like those of other religious denominations, sought to conquer for the sake of conquest. But there were also others who were drawn to battle by foreign hostilities and yet others were fired with the belief that the Good (Muslims) must conquer Evil (the non-believers) in the service of God. By the time the Berber/Arab Muslims of North Africa (known to the Greeks as Libyans, identified by some Western historians as inhabitants of Morocco and therefore "Moors") had conquered Spain and parts of Italy and France in the West, the Muslim empire (now under more than one leadership) had spread from Spain to the Indus Valley of India in the East and the frontier of the T'ang Empire in China, to the North.

The Muslim invasion of southern Spain, as we have seen, was undertaken at the behest of Count Julian, himself a Goth, when his daughter was raped by the Goth sovereign Roderic who ruled Spain. Julian appealed to Emir Musa in North Africa "prevailing upon him to attempt the conquest of that country [Spain] and offering that he himself could take the lead"<sup>24</sup> Musa had obtained the permission of Caliph Al Walid in Damascus to the invasions, pointing to Count Julian's predicament and the fact that Spain (now Catholic, no longer Unitarian as it had been) was grossly mistreating the hundreds of thousands of Jews who had been forcibly moved there by Emperor Hadrian, and were being forced to choose between baptism or death.<sup>25</sup>

With Al Walid's permission, Musa sent his lieutenant Tariq with a force to Spain; they "landed at the rock, called in memory of his name Gibraltar [Jabb al-Tarik] in 711. In the battle that ensued a part of Roderic's troops, together with the Archbishop of Toledo... *deserted to the Arabs*; the rest were panic-stricken. In the rout, Roderic himself was drowned in the waters of Guadalquivir" writes Draper.<sup>26</sup> Amir Musa now joined the forces, and preceded northwards. "As the towns successfully fell, they left them in *charge of the Jews, to whose revenge the conquest was largely due and who could be thoroughly trusted*," reports Draper.<sup>27</sup>

Musa's military campaign beyond central Spain may have been due to his own exhilarated state at his successes, or he was encouraged to do so by the local Christian rulers unhappy with Rome's control. However word reached the new Caliph Suleiman in Damascus of Musa's continuing conquests northwards. He sent orders to Musa to stop and turn back. Musa reportedly resisted, unable to believe that his enormous success was objectionable to the Caliph. So now

Caliph Suleiman sent orders for the arrest of Musa and his return to Damascus to face trials. Musa argued that he *had* to fight on against approaching Christian forces. Musa was imprisoned in Damascus, and so heavily fined that when he was released after serving his prison term, he was penniless and remained a pauper the rest of his life.

The Christian resisters of the "Moorish" conquests were more fortunate in that they received huge accolades then and later. But, as Armstrong points out, the Muslims had never wished to conquer Europe, which they considered too barbaric to be worth the effort, and the confrontation with Martel, which Western history books eulogize as epoch-making, has never been worth anything of note in Muslim history; to the latter Amir Musa got carried away with his military successes, encouraged by local Christian leaders who sought his help.

Muslim leaders have misused "Jihad" (Holy War) in Asia and Europe. But the idea that the Muslims sought to conquer all of Europe gained currency because Gibbons rather impishly sought to add color to his work by claiming that, had Martel not stopped them, the Qur'an would now be taught at Oxford University. This ludicrous hyperbole, against all known facts, has been rejected by serious historians but pop historians of later year and commercial TV and moviemakers seized upon Gibbon's comment as gospel truth and have made fortunes from it. And still do. Responsible scholars continue to criticize this erroneous claim. Karen Armstrong (in *Holy Wars*) is one such serious scholar "This [Gibbon's claim] is a distorted and exaggerated view. The Sultan was not continuing the *jihad* and had no intention of conquering. *He had been invited into Christendom by Eudo, Duke of Aquitaine, who wanted his help against Charles Martel...* They [Muslims] had no designs on Europe, which they saw as an undesirable place, with a dreadful climate and primitive, backward inhabitants".<sup>28</sup> In fact the Muslims of North Africa did not see Spain as "Europe" but merely an extension of their North African homeland, Tangier and Cuerto in present-day Morocco, which the Visigoths had recently conquered and whose Duke had entreated the Berbers of Morocco to take up arms against Spain, is about 15 miles from the tip of Spain. In those days, the current rigid borders between countries and continents did not exist. Movements and conquests had been common for generations between these borders.

Now the Berbers/Arabs did invade, conquer and rule Spain for seven hundred years to create what all responsible historians have called an immensely advanced society, which became the cornerstone for the eventual civilization of Europe. Ironically Gibbon's "history", written a thousand years later, would be earned more scholarly respect if he had admitted, that it was from emulating the Muslim institutions of learning in Spain that England's Oxford University and France's Sorbonne University were later to emerge, and use many of the works of those Muslims as textbooks for several centuries thereafter! Gibbon's countryman, the redoubtable H.G. Wells in *An Outline History of the World*<sup>29</sup> is more honest and says, "By 700 A.D., the Arabs [Muslims] had already begun to resurrect the huge reservoir of Greek knowledge. Greek manuscripts were being translated into Syrian, an Arab language, at Dar el Hikma, the academy of Baghdad. In interpreting, the



Arabs, Persians and the Mesopotamians were beginning to erect something of an intellectual edifice of their own. It was eventually from these efforts that Aristotle, Plato, Euclid, Heraclitus and Galen were salvaged from oblivion and eventually passed on to the West. Through the Arab world it was and not by the Latin route that the modern world received the gift of light and power...if the Greek was the father than the Arab was the foster father of Western civilization."

"That the Mohammedan [sic] conquerors and their successors were inspired by a fanatical hatred of Christianity is a fiction invented by Christians" wrote C.H. Becker, "*Christianity and Islam*"<sup>30</sup> (London 1909). Dr. Delacy Leary in his book *Islam at the Crossroads*, (London 1923). "Muslim rule was neither oppressive nor unenlightened. Further, the Muslims were friends of learning and it was not Muslims but monks who burnt the Greek library at Alexandria."

There is substantial evidence to prove that most of the local inhabitants, and some local Christian princelings, were very content with Muslim rule in Spain. "The people who had been conquered by the Muslim armies, however, had quite a different view of the *jihad* and they did not regard the conquests of Islam as a catastrophe. Quite the reverse was true; it was the start of a new and exciting phase in their history... Certainly the new masters had a different religion but many found that Islam was very attractive. When the Muslims conquered a people, they did not attempt to force conversion on their new subjects. Mohammed had given an eloquent example of the Islamic principle of the sanctity of the individual conscience...The system was that the Christians, Jews and other religious groups were allowed to practice their religion freely but they had to accept that Islam was the state religion and supreme in the land. These groups were called *dhimmi*es or protected minorities. They paid a tax in return for Muslim protection — a common enough measure at this time. Occasionally prohibitive measures and even massacres occurred but they usually followed a Jewish or Christian revolt against the Muslim rule. *The Muslims were putting down an uprising, not refusing to accept the existence of a rival religion...* it must be emphasized once more that there was no pressure to convert. Indeed for one brief period in about 700 [AD] the caliphs actually *forbade* conversion by law" says Armstrong.<sup>31</sup> "The Muslim view of Jesus as a great and privileged prophet made far more sense [to the local populace] as did their policy of toleration to these long-suffering [under Catholic rule] and puzzled Christians. Again, in Spain, this Koranic view of Jesus greatly appealed to many of the Visigoths, who had been converted from Arianism, which had much the same view of Christ. In Islam many people found a form of monotheism that they could actually understand and they also discovered that it had a dynamism and excitement all its own. Similarly, the Jews much preferred Islam to Christianity."

Prof. Draper, himself a renowned academic of the nineteenth century (the first American academic to be honored at Oxford University) waxes lyrical at the thirst for knowledge among the Muslims of that era, in Baghdad and in Spain. "While the Byzantines obliterated science in theology, the Saracens [sic] illuminated it in medicine... Many of the noblest philosophic and scientific works of antiquity disappeared [under Byzantine rule] from the language in which they were written

and were recovered, for the use of later and better ages, from translations which the Saracens had made in Arabic," he says referring to the school in Baghdad [where the Caliphate had now been moved from Damascus by the new Abbaside dynasty] where Greek works were being translated into Arabic. Prof. Draper says "almost every day camels laden with volumes were entering the gates of Baghdad. To add to the supply, Emperor Michael was compelled by treaty to furnish Greek books... Schools arose in Bassora [Basra], Ispahan [Isfahan], Samarcand, Fez [Morocco], Sicily, Cordova, Seville, Granada [all under Muslim rule]" Draper goes on to praise Ibn Rusd (Averroes) Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Khalid, says Roger Bacon was to consider Djafar as the "Master."

"Avicenna wrote 20 volumes on science, health, physics, astronomy, mathematics, language, origin of the soul, geometry, on Finite and Infinity and human knowledge." Regarding Muslim rule in Spain, he says "the Khalifs of Cordova distinguished themselves as patrons of learning and set an example of refinement strongly contrasting with the condition of the native European princes. Cordova, under their administration, at its highest point of prosperity, boasted of more than two hundred thousand houses, and more than a million inhabitants. After sunset, a man might walk through it in a straight line for ten miles by the light of the public lamps. Seven hundred years after this time, there was not so much as a single public lamp in London. Its [Cordova's] streets were solidly paved. In Paris, subsequently, whoever stepped over his threshold on a rainy day stepped up to his ankles in mud...these sovereigns might well look down with supercilious contempt on the dwellings of the rulers of Germany, France and England, which were scarce better than stables chimneyless, windowless and with a hole in the roof for the smoke to escape. The Spanish Mohammedans had brought with them all the luxuries and prodigality's of Asia... the Khalif Alhakem's [library] was so large that the catalogue alone filled forty volumes...to these Saracens we are indebted for many of our personal comforts. Religiously cleanly, it was not possible for them to clothe, according to the fashion of the natives of Europe, in a garment unchanged till it dropped to pieces of itself, a loathsome mass of vermin, stench and rags...they taught us the use of the oft-changed and oft-washed under-garment of linen and cotton...the khalifs of the West carried out the precepts of Ali, the fourth successor of Mohamed, in the patronage of literature...to every mosque was attached a public school in which the children of the poor were taught to read and write...for those in easier circumstances, there were academies... in Cordova, Granada and other great cities... from these institutions many of the practices observed in our colleges were derived..."<sup>32</sup>

## Chapter 3

# Muslim Pre-Eminence in the Arts and Sciences

(1)

In his monumental four-volume work *A History of the Inquisition in Spain* Dr. Henry Charles Lea says that not only Jews but many Christians helped the Muslims in their conquest of Spain: "If the Jews helped the Moslem...they did so not more than a large number of the Christians. To the mass of the population the Goths were merely barbarous masters, whose yoke they were ready to exchange for that of the Moors." The Moors "allowed them [their non-Muslim subjects] the enjoyment of their laws and religion under native counts and bishops. In spite of this liberality, vast numbers embraced Mohammedanism, partly to avoid taxes and partly through conviction that the marvelous success of the Moslem cause was a proof of its righteousness... The Saracens long maintained the policy adopted in the conquest and made no attempt to convert their Christian subjects. *In fact, the condition of the Mozarabes, or subject Christians, under the caliphs of Cordova was, for the most part, preferable to what it had been under the Gothic kings.* Mozarabes were frequently in command of the Moslem armies; they formed the royal body-guard and were employed as secretaries in the highest offices of state...When the Cid conquered Valencia, in 1096, one of the conditions of surrender was that the garrison should be composed of Mozarabes, and the capitulation was signed by the principal Christian as well as the Moslem citizens."<sup>1</sup>

It should be said that there were some Christian and Muslim rulers in Spain who were brazenly and brutally partisan towards their own kind, and there were battles between them. The Berbers who invaded later and overthrew the original Muslims regimes, for instance, were initially not at all generous towards the Christians. Ironically they came to Spain about 1090 at the invitation of petty kings whom Alfonso VI had treated very brutally as his conquests expanded from Galacia to Leon to Castile. These Berbers (Almoravides) drove Alfonso back, but then "their leader Jusuf ibn Techufin overthrew feeble dynasties and

established himself as supreme in Muslim Spain." He was brutal towards Christians at the start. But soon, the Berbers settled to a friendly relationship with the Christians; "King Ali of Cordova...even entrusted to a noble of Barcelona named Reverter the command of his armies. His son Techufin followed his example and was regarded as a special friend of the Christians who aided him in his African wars." (Lea) Then came another period of brutality for the Christians under Abd-al-mumim. This was followed by another period of goodwill between Christians and Muslims. "Co-operation... with the Christians meets us at every step in the annals of the Spanish Saracens... indeed the facility of conversion from one faith to another [Islam and Christianity] was a marked feature of the period and shows how little firmness of religious conviction existed... *religious differences, in fact, were of much less importance than political aims, and everywhere... Christian and Moslem were intermingled in the interminable civil broils of that tumultuous time.* In an attempt on Granada, in 1162, the principal captains of Ibn-Mardanich were two sons of the Count of Urgel and a grandson of Alvar Fanez, the favorite lieutenant of the Cid," writes Lea.<sup>2</sup> Note that at this time, the Crusaders were rampaging in Jerusalem.

There is one other point that needs to be made with regard to the Muslim presence in Spain. Today, "Europe" is essentially white and Christian, thirteen hundred years ago such divisions did not exist; when therefore the Gothic Duke Julian had entreated Emir Musa in North Africa to invade Spain and topple fellow-Goth King Roderic, he was appealing to a neighbor to march a few miles with him across the tip of present-day Morocco to Spain; and, as we have seen, the Muslims set up an extraordinary civilization in Spain that became the cornerstone for the civilization of Europe. As Dr. Lea (no sympathizer with the Muslims) admits, other than the occasional extremists, there was complete "intermingling" between Muslims and Christians; frequently there were alliances and friendships between the rulers, and that many Christians preferred the Muslim rule over the Christian Goths (now Roman Catholics) who had preceded them.

(2)

For the Church in Rome and Spain, however, Islam remained an evil to be stamped out. Any and every means was sought to denigrate it and its founder. Curiously the wild distortions about Islam at the start had evidently led subsequent generations in Europe to become very confused and apparently unable to tell Islam from Zoroastrianism, and for some time, even the Church was apparently unsure whether they were the same or different religions. The Christian Manichean sect was believed to have been influenced by the "fire-worshipping" Persians, and loathing for the Zoroastrian religion had already existed in the Catholic Church.

Even when Islam was recognized as being a distinct religion, however, stories continued to be made up: these Arabs were monsters; Muhammad was depicted as wearing horns; it was said that the Muslim creatures had their heads spouting from their diaphragm. After the enormous hostilities and bloodshed before the Pauline



Doctrine (of Trinity and Jesus as Son of God) had become dominant in the Christian world, even those within the Church who knew a few basics about Islam — and many who soon went for advanced studies at Muslims schools and colleges in Spain had to know — felt it was their “Christian duty” to present Islam in the worst possible light. Even after Muslim rule in Spain was established, and it was clear that these Muslims in fact brought an extraordinarily advanced knowledge of science and the arts, advanced hygiene and innovations in lifestyle, the Church condemned Muslims even more for their secular learning.

How deep this abhorrence for Islam was, is best illustrated by examining some of the material being written by the Church about Islam, in *Spain itself* during this era. In *The Arabs and Medieval Europe*, (Longman, London 1975), Norman Daniel mentions, among other sources of such distortions Eulogio of Cordova, Archbishop of Toledo; his writings, says Daniel, claim “he traveled to Pamplona, he looked through the ‘unknown’ books” in the monastery, and found a short anonymous history of the [Muslim] Prophet.” Huge inaccuracies even about known facts and dates, “total misstatements, as about the Prophet’s capture of Damascus,” where it is claimed the Muslims “killed the brother of the emperor of the land” we find misrepresentation — equally fictitious — of the teachings of the prophet. The idea, for example that the prophet expected to be resurrected” (i.e., like Christ)... “The Quranic praises [of Jesus], of course, [in reality] extend to the mother of Jesus, and it is curious that Eulogio writes that he will say nothing about the horrible sacrilege about Mary [in Islam]!” By cunningly referring to “vague sacrilege about Mary”, Eulogio could suggest some horrible comments in the *Qur’an* and at the same time avoid admitting that the *Qur’an* in fact devotes an entire chapter of praise for Virgin Mary.

Another priest, Alvaro of Cordova specialized in providing his own lies about Islam. He claimed that the *muezzin* (man who calls Muslims to prayer) is really considered a god by Muslims called *Maazim*, the devil of the Old Testament! This expert claimed that Muslims “dedicate Friday to ‘the stomach and lust.’”

“Everything [in the attitude of these Spanish priests and their writings] points to the existence of a continuous Spanish Christian tradition which existed before our authors, on which they drew, and which survived long after them ... Above all, there was a well of resentment, constantly replenished,” says Daniel.<sup>3</sup>

Even as the Church accused Muslim “barbarians” of invading, raping, pillaging, and spreading “Islam at the point of the sword,” gruesome brutality and debauchery seems to have been commonplace not just in Europe generally but within the Church in Rome itself. Popes married, had several mistresses, owned huge estates, and dictated terms to secular rulers. Intrigue, torture and murder were all too frequent as one after another aspirant for the papacy and supporters sought the highly rewarding office.

Of the several works written over the years detailing some of these gruesome details, we might consider just one brief period of time, from 750 AD or when Muslims had entered and commenced to civilize Spain and through it, Europe, and up to the end of the century or when the first Crusades were launched officially.

Consider just one source e.g., Prof. Draper’s 1865 work *The Intellectual Development of Europe*: “The singular peculiarity of the papacy is that, though its history may be imposing, its biography is infamous. I shall, however, forbear to speak of it in this latter respect more than the occasion seems necessary to require it, shall pass in silence some of those cases which would profoundly shock my readers.” He gives us some examples not as shocking as the ones he admits he leaves out from good taste. After Pope Paul I died in 757 A.D., the Duke of Nepi had his brother Constantine made pope; the latter was not only unqualified but made enemies; when he was superseded by Stephen IV, “the eyes of Constantine were put out; the tongue of Bishop Theodoros [his supporter] was amputated, and he was left in a dungeon to expire...The nephews of Pope Adrian seized his successor Pope Leo III A.D. 795, in the street, and forcing him into a neighboring church and attempted to put out his eyes and cut off his tongue...His successor Stephen V A.D. 816 was ignominiously driven from the city; his successor Paschal I, was accused of blinding and murdering two ecclesiastics in the Lateran Palace...Boniface VI, [pope in 896 A.D.]...had [previously] been deposed from the diaconate, and again from the priesthood, for his immoral and lewd life. The dead body of [pope] Formosus was taken from the grave, clothed in the papal habiliments, propped up in a chair and tried before a council, and the preposterous and indecent scene completed by cutting off three fingers of the corpse and casting them into the [river] Tiber. [Later] Stephen himself was ...thrown into prison and then strangled. In the course of five years, from A.D. 896 to A.D. 900, five popes were consecrated. Leo V who succeeded in A.D. 904 was, in less than two months, thrown into prison by Christopher, one of his chaplains, who usurped his place and who, in his turn, was shortly expelled from Rome by Serius III who, with the aid of a military force, seized the pontificate AD 905. This man, according to the testimony of the times, lived in criminal intercourse with the celebrated prostitute Theodora, who, with her daughter, Marozia and Theodora, also prostitutes, exercised an extraordinary control over him [Pope Serius]. The love of Theodora was also shared by John X [later pope]: she first gave him the archbishopric of Tavenna, and then translated him to Rome, A.D.915, as pope...By the love of Theodora, as was said, he had maintained himself in the papacy for fourteen years; by the intrigues and hatred of her daughter Marozia, he was [later] overthrown...after a short interval Marozia made her own son pope as John XI, A.D.931. Many affirmed that Pope Sergius [also her mother’s lover] was his father...another of her sons, Alberic...jealous of his brother John, cast him and their mother Marozia into prison. After a while Alberic’s son was elected pope, A.D. 956; he assumed the title of John XII, the amorous Marozia thus having given a son and grandson to the papacy. His [John XII’s] reign was characterized by the most shocking immoralities...he was charged with incest with one of his father’s concubines, and with so many adulteries that the Lateran Palace had become a brothel...After such details it is almost needless to the annals of succeeding popes to relate that John XIII was strangled in prison; that Boniface VII imprisoned Benedict VII and killed him by starvation; that John XIV was secretly put to death in the dungeons of the

castle of St. Angelo; that the corpse of Boniface was dragged by the populace through the streets... it seemed impossible that things could become worse; yet Rome was still to see Benedict IX A.D. 1033, a boy of less than twelve years, raised to the apostolic throne. Of this pontiff, one of his successors, Victor III, declared that his life was so shameful, so foul, so execrable, that he shuddered to describe it... In despair of maintaining his position, he put up the papacy to auction. A presbyter named John, who became Gregory VI A.D. 1045, bought it. More than a thousand years had elapsed since the birth of our Savior and such was the condition of Rome.<sup>14</sup>

## (3)

It was in this period that Charles Martel was to be glorified in songs of praise for supposedly defeating the Muslim Moors at the Battle of Tours in 732; Martel's son, Pepin the Short was the major-domo at the court of the Frankish King Childeric, but he used his close connections with the pope to good advantage, appointing himself Pope Stephen II's "chief secular protector" so that when he proceeded to usurp Childeric in 752 A.D., and crowned himself King, the Church did not object. Pepin now proceeded to launch into battles against European tribes not as yet converted to Christianity; he "build up a powerful Frankish empire, forcing more pagan people into the Church as sword point... these holy wars were continued by his son Charlemagne" (Arm 51).<sup>5</sup>

Pepin died in 768 A.D., leaving his throne jointly to his two sons Charlemagne and Carloman. Carloman died suddenly; his wife, convinced that Charlemagne was responsible, fled with her sons to seek protection under the King of the Lombards; even Einhard, Charlemagne's close friend and chronicler, admits (in his *Life of Charlemagne*, trans. Lewis Thorpe, Penguin 1969) that she fled from fear of Charlemagne.<sup>6</sup> Soon, Carloman's two little sons died suddenly anyway, a fact, which even historian Gibbon, feels a little uneasy about. So Charlemagne became sole king of the Franks. And he proceeded to the battlefields, slaughtering the Saxons, Avars, Wends, Italians and any Spanish Moors he could lay his hands on unless they were willing to become Catholics. In his reign of 43 years, he is reported to have waged fifty-four wars. Prof. Martin Scott ("Medieval Europe") contends he was best suited for his times, "a great warrior... although the gentle scholar Alcuin [sic] might have doubts about the forcible baptism of whole tribes of pagan Saxons or the execution by beheading of 4500 pagan rebels in one ceremony."<sup>7</sup> Edward Gibbon, in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (John Murray, London 1872) says (vol.6, p.170) "Of his moral virtues, chastity is not the most conspicuous, but the public happiness could not be materially injured by his nine wives or concubines, the various indulgences of meaner or more transient amours, the multitude of his bastards whom he bestowed on the church, and the long celibacy and licentious manners of his daughters, whom the father was suspected of loving with too fond a passion. I shall be scarcely permitted to accuse the ambition of a conqueror; but in a day of equal retribution, the sons of

his brother Carloman, the Merovingian princes of Aquitaine, and the four thousand five hundred Saxons who were beheaded on the same spot, would have something to allege against the justice and humanity of Charlemagne."<sup>8</sup> In fact, he not only had many wives, but collected lots of concubines as he went along, and he eventually acknowledged ten illegitimate children. "I do think that people who confess to ten illegitimate children probably have more" says the irrepressible Will Cuppy "One of Charlemagne's admirers has called him the greatest intellect of the Middle Ages. He was hardly that, though he did try to learn to read and write."<sup>9</sup>

The militant, Charlemagne now challenged the Lombards, who were Arian Christians. Eventually he crossed the Alps, crushed the Lombards, adding their kingdom to his, exchanged oaths of loyalty with Pope Hadrian I in 774 A.D., and made huge property donations to the pope. Charlemagne's plain offer of conversion to Christianity or death created rivers of blood, but his conquests were to create a vast empire, which Western historians say created the idea of Europe as a continent. "It is in Charlemagne's empire that we can first see the shape of Europe, as a unit of society and culture distinct from the Mediterranean world" says R.R. Palmer (*History of the Modern World*, Knopf, 1958).<sup>10</sup>

With the Church of Rome and the Church of Constantinople now the most prominent (though hostile and having excommunicated each other), and literacy confined to the clergy, Pope Leo III who succeeded Hadrian was accused of adultery and corruption, and he was about to be forced to resign. Charlemagne's friend and biographer Einhard claims that the inhabitants of Rome had violently attacked Pope Leo, putting out his eyes and cutting off his tongue. Whether this actually happened or not, there is no doubt that there was enormous condemnation of Leo by the public and demands for his removal. Then Charlemagne offered to arbitrate. Two days before Christmas, 800 A.D., Charlemagne reported that he had asked the pope to swear a solemn oath that he was innocent of all charges and Pope Leo swore he was. So Charlemagne announced to the world that Leo was innocent. On Christmas Day that year, a grateful Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire of the West in a grand ceremony. "This was a deliberate affront to Byzantium, as both Charlemagne and Leo were well aware. It seemed preposterous that Charlemagne, who could neither read nor write, should array himself in the imperial regalia and consider himself the equal of the learned Greek Emperor. It was also painful that a descendant of those barbarians who had destroyed the Empire of the West was now sitting on the imperial throne. But to many, Europe was now ready to take its destiny into its own hands and assert its independence of the haughty Greeks. Charlemagne's great Cathedral at St. Mary's in his imperial capital at Aachen was modeled on the Byzantine imperial basilica at Ravenna... His throne was quite consciously built to the measurement of Solomon's throne in Jerusalem and his biographers constantly compared him to the kings and heroes of Israel... the Franks were beginning to see themselves as a new chosen people... it is interesting that they [his biographers] showed no particular hostility to the Muslims: they relished the embassy of Harun al-Rashid, the Caliph of Baghdad, and these "Persians" as they were vaguely called, were treated very



sympathetically" writes Armstrong.<sup>11</sup> On his part Harun al-Rashid sent Charlemagne presents, on one occasion a camel laden with costly gifts.

Charlemagne was desperately seeking to make the new Holy Roman Empire equal in status with the Byzantine Empire. "The Byzantines were seen as the antithesis of the Western identity. Their [Greek] elegance and refinement (which the Westerners in fact deeply envied and knew was quite beyond them) had been distorted into an image of weak effeminacy. This scurrilous portrait, as fictional as the nine-century Cordovan portrait of 'the Muslim', was a crooked mirror image of Western deep-rooted feelings of inferiority and a projection of Western envy. The Westerners for their part were already cultivating an image of tough aggression, presenting it as a virtue."<sup>12</sup> But alongside the uncouth brutality that permeated Europe a different movement was emerging. "This reform started in the late tenth century in the Benedictine monastery of Cluny and in its many daughter houses," reports Armstrong.

Despite the enormous propaganda depicting Muslims and their religion as the work of the devil, many of the discerning could not help but recognize that if one needed an advanced education, it had to be in Muslim Spain. "Scholars from all over Europe went to study at Cordoba, just as today people go to the United States to perfect their studies."<sup>13</sup> Promising students sought patrons to finance them. *Several future popes went for studies to Muslim Spain.* Emperor Otto III, who was convinced that education was vital to control the unending "wickedness" of Europe, sponsored one Gerbert, a Frank, who was sent to Muslim schools in Spain where, in addition to mathematics, astronomy, physics, he studied philosophy, and became proficient in Arabic too. After completing his education, Gerbert moved to Rheims to start a school, because he felt there was grave need for educated teachers. "There is not one in Rome who knows enough of letters to qualify him for a door-keeper; with what face shall he presume to teach who has never learned?" he asked.<sup>14</sup> Next, Otto III appointed Gerbert Archbishop of Rheims. The Church revolted "because the vicars of Peter will not have for their teachers a Plato, a Virgil, a Terence and the rest of the herd of philosophers" said Pope Leo who presided over the condemnation of Gerbert says Draper. "In all of this, we see the beginnings of that struggle between the Mohammedan learning and morals and Italian ignorance and crime, at last to produce such important results in Europe."<sup>15</sup>

Despite strong Vatican objections, Otto III was determined that Gerbert should become pope, after the next pope (Pope Gregory V). And Gerbert did become Pope Sylvester II. He was accused of being a devil, a secret Muslim. There was an explosion of fury when he produced a translation of the Qur'an in Latin — even though this was clearly a translation, which, intentionally or otherwise, denigrated rather than fairly presented the Qur'an. The unending threats soon unnerved Sylvester, who, to prove his faithfulness to Christianity, decided to ask for money and arms to help Emperor Alexius who had asked for assistance against the Turks in Byzantium. That help was not forthcoming. Sylvester's own commitment to Christianity still remained suspect because of his education in Spain, Otto III, his patron, was found dead of poison and soon so was Sylvester II, says Draper. He

also reports that another future pope, Hildebrand, who became Pope Gregory VII, had also been educated at the Muslims schools in Spain and reported that many Christian students from all over Europe were at these Muslims schools and universities in Spain when he was there. "The Spanish universities of the Muslims were filled with [Christians] ecclesiastics from many parts of Europe (Draper Vol.2 p.12).<sup>16</sup> For the more conscientious, as the intellectual advancement of Muslim Spain became known, visited and learned from, "Arabian philosophy, unseen, and silently, was diffusing itself." But Gregory VII as pope, felt that before reforms could be instituted, he had to command supreme powers and take drastic steps within the Church. And he decided on his own very controversial reforms. He felt that the way to cure the prolific sexual depravity within the Church was to insist that all clergy be celibate. At this the married clergy accused him of being the lover of Countess Matilda, and on Christmas night, 1075 A.D., Pope Gregory was stripped at the altar and carried away bodily, but rescued later says Draper.<sup>17</sup> In an attempt to control the temporal princes, in 1076 A.D. at the Third Lateran Council, he had papal laws passed to claim that (1) only the pope is universal (2) temporal princes must kiss the feet of the pope (3) the pope has the right to depose emperors (4) any sentence passed by the pope cannot be annulled (5) the Roman Church (the pope) is infallible.

King Henry of Germany first resisted, then begged forgiveness, finally took up arms in 1081, attacked and laid siege on Rome. The Normans (whom Gregory had previously supported when they invaded and conquered England) came to the pope's aid now. The Norman army included many Muslims, and it is the *only recorded instance when Muslim forces entered Rome and, ironically, they came to rescue the Pope!* It would become even more ironical soon, that the pope whom Muslims came to save was under pressure of being suspected of being a secret Muslim, to save himself by being the first to call for a "Crusade"!

#### (4)

While the Cluny reform movement might have been influenced to some degree by Muslim Spain, it also had its own agenda, especially on matters of papal authority and on sexual proclivities within the Church itself and outside of it. Muslims believed that within rules laid down by God, sex was a great endowment from God, and even theologians should not abstain from it. On the other hand, with the unbridled sexual depravity that prevailed even within the Church so frequently, esoteric Christians now increasing advocated celibacy as the only solution within the Church, with strict laws upon the laity too. "The Cluniac monks wanted to Christianize the people of Europe and educate them in the ways of true Christianity" writes Armstrong.<sup>18</sup> They argued that Jesus had lived among the poor lived a celibate life, so the Christian clergy should do the same. The Catholic clergy resisted this very strongly but celibacy became law in 1215 A.D., though *not* by any means in practice.

The Cluny movement became successful among segments of Europe's Christians and even included some popes after Gregory VII. However, as wealth

poured in, questions were raised about the fact that "the Cluniac monks lived more comfortably than most of the poor people of the time and that the Cluniac monasteries were rich and powerful establishments," reports Armstrong. They also began what was to become a feature of Christianity over future centuries, the building of elaborate, tall churches unlike the very humble churches that had hitherto been built; "This is very impressive when we remember how poor Europe was at this time" says Armstrong.<sup>19</sup> And among the strict controls they proposed in sex was that even married couples should not have sex during Lent, Advent and other holy days, during menstruation, pregnancy and breast-feeding, and on Monday, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, says Armstrong. There was, of course, resistance to this form of Christianity. Later the movement came under brutal physical attack by the pope himself directing a "crusade against them, but in many ways, it was the Cluniac order, who instilled a spiritual tone and self-denial to Christianity in Europe," says Armstrong.<sup>20</sup>

The Cluny movement believed in pilgrimages, but "it was the journey, not the arrival that counted" says Armstrong.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, to most Europe, only recently and somewhat superficially converted to Christianity from paganism, "holiness" was not a spiritual or moral state so much as a power that manifested itself physically like a holy radioactivity...relics were the most important element in the religious experience of Europe" says Armstrong.<sup>22</sup> This "literal-mindedness of Western Christianity and its obsession for the holiness of the physical relics" was to reach hysterical proportions during the Crusades. "This frantic and irrational love for the Holy Land was quite alien to the piety of the Byzantines, who found it typical of the primitive religion of the Western Christians".<sup>23</sup>

But "before any real progress could be made in Europe it was essential that the internecine feudal warfare that was tearing society apart come to an end".<sup>24</sup> The centuries of warfare had not made the vast majority of Europeans more spiritual or educated but it had made them, the emperors, knights, and even some popes, down to the lowest feudal serf (at least those who survived the mayhem) into experienced fighters. So prone were the people to battle that they had constantly worked on improving their own chances of survival, from the metal armor that covered their bodies and the metal masks that covered the knights from head to foot, the fineries of training and breeding of horses (which they were beginning to learn from the Spanish Arabs). Even daily rituals developed from the attitudes of the times. For instance, shaking hands developed as a "traditional" friendly gesture because it ensured that the two individuals involved were free of weapons to thrust into each other. The problem now was that when there was no external threat from one ethnic tribe invading the other, warfare between feudal fiefs were more frequent and within ethnic tribes "knights and barons started to fight each other. The country was devastated and property and crops vandalized. To counter this, the Church initiated a peace movement, which was called the Peace of God. Clergy tried to assemble rich and poor in a movement called the Truce of God; knights "were taught that to fight other Christians was deeply sinful... Cluniac reformers began to try to reform the institution of knighthood itself. Instead of harrying the poor and the helpless, they taught that the Christian knight should come to the defense of the poor

and the needy".<sup>25</sup> Mass communication was chiefly through stories and songs; soon mythical stories of glories with gallant "knights in shiny armor" coming to the aid of "damsels in distress" were spreading across Europe to encourage real-life knights to change their ways. The real-life lot of "damsels in distress" was that of sex objects in the feudal society; all girls, especially those of the lower classes, and not just peasant girls and domestic staff were free commodity for the pleasure of the upper classes, from knights to erring clergy, whenever they wished. No one objected, many considered such "attention" an honor, and so did their families. Feudal lords even had rights to first nights with brides in the field. Even women of upper status were not at all immune from molestation.

It was from songs and mythical tales, not real life, that the legend of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Tables evolved. There were some such tales in rural Wales, which gained strength through French medieval writers (as the French and their language were the taste-makers of the British Isle as well). "The legend of Arthur as a world conqueror was clearly inspired by legends surrounding great leaders such as Alexander the Great and Charlemagne", says the Encyclopedia Britannica. The "Holy Grail" also soon developed and grew to have a life of its own. Stories about it too seem to have begun in France, but were transported to England and grew with succeeding generations "The first extant text to give such a vessel Christian significance as the mysterious holy object was Chretien de Troyes's late 12th century unfinished romance *Perceval or Le Conte du Graal*, which introduces the guileless rustic knight Perceval, whose dominant trait is innocence. In it the religious is combined with the fantastic" says the Encyclopedia. Of course in recent times, Tennyson's "Idylls of the kings" and then the musical "Camelot" of this century made it into one of the most famous romantic tales of all times. Many, even today, believe it to be actual history, and firmly believe that British (and other European) knights rode to great noble adventures then and later. Even those in Europe who knew this, like many other tales, to be mere mythical legends were happy — as they are today — to have it reflect glory to their heritage, even if it is very far from the truth. As Christianity spread through Europe, there was also a yearning to be somehow associated directly with the founders of Christianity, rather than have to look upon a distant land as the sole recipient of God's favor. Self-fulfilling tales soon abounded; "this is why legends developed which maintained that after his death many of Jesus' friends had come to Europe and were buried there. St. Peter was firmly believed to have come to Rome, even though there is not a shred of evidence for this. Similarly Mary Magdalene was said to have settled in the south of France and Joseph of Arimathea was believed to have brought the faith to England and to have buried at Glastonbury. Above all, St. James who was called the brother of the Lord, was believed to have come to Spain and to be buried at Compostela" writes Armstrong.<sup>26</sup> There was not, nor is today, any evidence to support any such "migration", yet these became routes for pilgrimage among Christians for generations.

In his scholastic three-volume work *History of The Civilization of England* (Longmans Green & Co, 1885), historian Henry Thomas Buckle deplors these



trends. "The corruption of history...were, in Europe, aided by an additional cause. With the art of writing, there was, in most cases, also communicated a knowledge of Christianity; and the new religion not only destroyed many of the Pagan traditions, but falsified the remainder, by *amalgamating* them with monastic legends...in the ninth and tenth century, Christian missionaries introduced a knowledge of their religion among the inhabitants of Northern Europe. Scarcely was this affected, when the sources of history began to be poisoned." Buckle gives many amusing examples of a series of ridiculous distortions, which have come to be accepted over the centuries. Among the many examples, wryly provided by Buckle, is that "historians" of the time claimed that the Scots are descended from the Egyptians, through Scota, a Pharaoh's daughter (a learned cleric wrote this to the pope in the fourteenth century "as a well-known historical fact"); her progeny had apparently wrested part of the British Isle from the progeny of Brute; Brute himself was the son (some sources said grandson) of Ascanius; that the city of Naples "was founded on eggs, and it was also known that the order of St. Michael was instituted in person by the archangel, who was himself the first knight, and to whom, in fact, chivalry owes its origin." And Judas (who betrayed Jesus), according to "a celebrated historian of the fourteenth century Mathew of Westminster" in *Mathaei Westmonasterii Flores Historiarum* (part i), was, as an infant, deserted on an island called Scariot "from which he received the name of Judas Iscariot." When he grew up, "he slew his father and then married his own mother."<sup>27</sup>

Among the examples Prof. Buckle provides are the ludicrous fantasies created about Charlemagne and King Arthur and his Knights "which exercised the most influence, and were most universally believed" he says. Buckle tells us that in 1147 A.D., the Archdeacon of Monmouth published *History of the Britons* in collaboration with Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford, and became "the most popular of all the productions of the Middle Ages." Tongue-in-cheek, Buckle gives us details of this "history", which says that after Troy was captured, Ascanius fled, with his son Brutus. "In those days England was peopled by giants, all of whom were slain by Brutus, who...built London...called [the country] by the name of Britain [after himself]. The Archdeacon proceeds to relate the actions of a long line of kings who succeeded Brutus." It seems it rained blood for three days in King Rivallo's time, and in Morvidus' reign "the coasts were infested by a horrid sea monster, which having devoured innumerable persons, at length swallowed the king himself...The two Archdeacons inform their readers, that King Arthur owed his existence to a magical contrivance of Merlin, the celebrated wizard. He [Arthur] slew an immense number of Saxons; he overran Norway, invaded Gaul, fixed his court at Paris...He engaged two giants in single combat, and killed them both," one of them had killed and eaten all the soldiers, many alive."<sup>28</sup>

"Such were the statements which, in the line of history, were laid before the world in the twelfth century" says Buckle "its [historical works'] vouchers were the Archdeacon of Monmouth and the Archdeacon of Oxford; it was dedicated to Robert, Earl of Gloucester, the son of Henry I; and it was considered so important a contribution to the national literature, that its principal author was raised to the

bishopric of Asaph — a preferment which he is said to owe to its success in investigating the annals of English history... indeed the feeling was so universal that, during several centuries, there are not more than two or three instances of any critic suspecting its accuracy," adds Buckle.<sup>29</sup>

In the eleventh century, the mythical tales about Charlemagne had reached such a level that there were calls everywhere to physically resurrect his corpse, as it must live. Prof. Buckle in his 1885 *History of Civilization of England* gives us a few examples of ridiculous exaggerations he found dating back to the eleventh century. Buckle refers to "The Chronicle of Turpin, written by Turpin, Archbishop of Rheims, a friend of the emperor and his companion in war...in 1122 it received the formal approbation of the pope; and that Vincent de Beauvais, one of the most celebrated writers in the thirteenth century, and tutor to the sons of [King] Louis IX, mentions it as a work of value, and as being the principal authority for the reign of Charlemagne."<sup>30</sup>

Prof. Buckle then gives us a synopsis of this "work of value": "In the Chronicle of Turpin, we are informed that the invasion of Spain by Charlemagne took place in consequence of the direct instigation of St. James, the brother of St. John... When Charlemagne besieged Pamplona... as soon as prayers were offered, the walls suddenly fell to the ground. After this the emperor [Charlemagne] overran the whole country, almost annihilated the Mohammedans, and built innumerable churches. By the resources of Satan are inexhaustible. On the side of the enemy [Muslims] a giant now appeared, whose name was Fenacut, who was descended from Goliath of old [i.e., Old Testament]... His strength was equal to that of forty men, his face measured one cubit; his arms and legs four cubits; his total height was twenty cubits. He killed every soldier Charlemagne sent against him. At length the celebrated Orlando came forward and challenged him in mortal combat...then challenged him to a theological discussion. Here the pagan was easily defeated; and Orlando... smote the giant with his sword, and dealt him a fatal wound. After this, the last hope of the Mohammedans was extinct; the Christian arms had finally triumphed, and Charlemagne divided Spain among the gallant followers who had aided him in effecting its conquest."<sup>31</sup> Such contempt for the truth is only possible if the people are ignorant of what is happening outside their immediate vicinity. In reality Muslims ruled Spain until the fifteenth century. And Charlemagne went into Spain, responsible historians confirm, on the side of one Muslim ruler.

Buckle also tells us that several historians insisted that "Since the Cross had fallen into Turkish hands, all Christian children have ten teeth less than formally: a universal calamity, which there seems to be no means of repairing." Buckle tells us that this belief was widespread all the way into the 18th century, quoting Peihnott (*Dictionnaire des Livres*, Vol ii, Paris 1806) who, says Rigord, in his *History of Philip Augustus* assures his readers of this fact. And "Matthew Paris, the most eminent historian during the thirteenth century, and one of the most eminent of the Middle Ages... informs us that the Mohammedans refuse to eat pork on account of a singular circumstance which happened to their prophet. It appears that Mohammed, having on one occasion, gorged himself with food and drink till he was in a state of

insensibility, fell asleep on a dunghill, and in this disgraceful condition, was seen by a litter of pigs. The pigs attacked the fallen prophet, and suffocated him to death; for which reason his followers abominate pigs, and refuse to partake of their flesh... another fact, equally striking, explains how it was that their sect came into existence. For it was well known, that Mohammed was *originally a cardinal, and only became a heretic because he failed in his design of being elected pope*" says Buckle (*Vol. I*).<sup>32</sup> In Europe of the time, pig flesh was, for most, the only meat available and the pilgrims who went to the Holy Land were often surprised to find other meats.

In the eleventh century, Armstrong says, "The Franks looked no further than Charlemagne...they wanted to be a Christian people, but they were also a violent and warlike people and they needed an aggressive religion. In their search for a solution, they rewrote the history of Charlemagne," says Armstrong.<sup>33</sup> As literacy was almost non-existent, this "history" was, as usual, in the form of songs and spoken poems. *The Chronicles of Turpin* was highly respected in the French court, as well as among ballad singers. Armstrong does refer to the influence of the famous *Chansons de Geste* and how wild stories were made up about "holy wars": "A new story developed that Charlemagne had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the eighth century. Then Frankish poets and minstrels started to compose the *Chansons de Geste*, the song of deeds, to celebrate the holy wars of Charlemagne." In reality, says Armstrong, "Charlemagne had considered his wars against the Saxons to be holy wars because they had brought the Germans [i.e., Saxons] into the Church. But although he had fought in Spain, these were certainly not holy wars. He had merely gone to help one Muslims leader against another. Yet in the *chansons des geste*, Charlemagne's Spanish wars became holy wars, because they provide the Franks with an enemy that could be attacked with impunity...The Muslims or Saracens provided a perfect 'enemy'... The *chansons* ludicrously present the Muslims worshipping idols of Mohammed and Apollo."<sup>34</sup>

In the *Song of Roland*, which was to become an epic poem to inspire Christians of the 11th century and looked upon even today with deep emotional fervor in Christendom, truth in history was contemptuously set aside. In real-life, "at the end of Charlemagne's campaign in Spain in 778, the Franks had been crossing the Pyrenees on their homeward march and the rear guard had been separated from the main army. It was ambushed and massacred at Roncevalles by an army of Basques. Among the slain was Roland, Duke of the Marches and Brittany and the hero of the famous *Song of Roland*. In the poem, his history has been completely transformed, for the people who attack him are Muslims, not Basques," writes Armstrong (a former nun). This shameless switch of the truth in fact made the "epic" poem even more popular. In the poem, Roland becomes what the Franks wanted him to be, a physical superman. "The Franks did not want to be wise or intellectual Christians; they saw themselves as men of action above all" says Armstrong. In the poem, Roland's friend Oliver wants Roland to call for Charlemagne's help by blowing the horn, but Roland refuses to do so. "Ronald is fierce and Oliver is wise," which makes Roland the true hero. Roland's sword is

given the name Durendal; it has supernatural powers; it is *holy*. "[In the poem], with Durendal, Roland has killed hundreds of Muslims, and the poet dwells on this slaughter in delighted but gruesome detail. Yet by means of this violence Roland had hacked his way into heaven, and during the Middle Ages he was venerated as a saint and martyr," reports Armstrong. Europe was still illiterate, but the Church provided guidelines. If truth is not appealing to you, *change* the truth. If you do that, *believing this lie serves Christianity*, you will be rewarded, not punished by God.

This, then, was the climate of Christian Europe when Pope Urban II called for the First Crusade in 1095. Significantly, "he was said to have addressed his appeal particularly to the Franks: in one version of his speech, Urban is said to call them 'a race chosen and beloved of God' and tells them to look back to Charlemagne for inspiration" [Armstrong quotes from Riley-Smith's *Outremer* (Jerusalem 1982)].<sup>34</sup> Urban was appalled that in spite of all his entreaties, warfare within Christian tribes had continued. A foreign enemy was critical to enforce unity. The Muslims were the obvious choice.

# ( 5 )

"Passions had been kindled with the Cluny movement and the truce of God among all levels of European Christianity. Religious gatherings took hysterical forms "similar to modern-day revivalist meetings" says Armstrong. There was widespread famine in 1033 across Europe. Now it was believed that the very laws of nature had been suspended, that "mankind might end...they believed that God was about to destroy the world because of their sins...people believed that it was exactly a thousand years since the Crucifixion of Christ ... the old Sibylline prophets of the late Roman period had said that, before the end of the world, an Emperor from the West would be crowned in Jerusalem and would fight Antichrist there and people began to look for an emperor who would fulfill this mission" writes Armstrong.<sup>35</sup>

Pilgrims went to Jerusalem in huge numbers, never more so than in 1033, the famine year. They returned to a starving Europe with stories of great riches and awed by the advanced societies in Muslim lands. "There was another mass exodus [in 1066] from Europe, when 7000 pilgrims left Europe for the Holy Land." When Pope Urban made his famous crusading speech in 1095, it was almost thirty years later and time for another such pilgrimage"(ibid).

And now, "there was a new confidence in the air...The Normans had long challenged Roman and Byzantine power in the south of Italy, and in 1061 Count Roger invaded the Muslim stronghold of Sicily and eventually conquered it...and in 1085 Spanish Christians, with the aid of Frankish knights, managed to conquer Toledo from the Muslims and pushed back the borders of al-Andalus...two months after his consecration he [Pope Leo in 1049] formed a Roman militia to fight the Normans who were threatening to invade his land, and in 1053 he *actually led his troops into battle himself*". In fact, by 1060, Pope Alexander II had already created a papal army to fight in Spain, offering "indulgences", a practice of absolving sins



and guaranteeing heaven (on an actual document) for those who fought for the army. Those who made large donations could be forgiven all sins.

Then Byzantine Emperor Alexius, despite fierce differences with Rome, had appealed for help to the pope in 1075. "The Seljuk Turks, a barbarian people who had converted to Islam, had poured into Asia Minor, which was part of the Byzantine Empire, and had seized a great deal of Christian territory" reports Armstrong. Rome did not help. In fact by 1095 Turkish power "had waned and their empire had been torn apart by internal quarreling and dissension." *It was much safer now for Rome to respond to the Byzantine appeal for help of 25 years earlier, with the Muslims so weakened.* Evidently Urban II felt that now, in 1095, it might also be the right time not only to help Byzantine Emperor Alexius, then march to the Holy Land and capture it from the weakened and disorganized Muslims. There was another critical reason for a "crusade": "If Urban could proclaim common cause for all Christians, much might be done to heal the wounds of Christendom and to unite imperialist and papalist in one common cause...It is easy to find non-religious causes for the crusades" says Prof. J. J. Saunders in *A History of Medieval Islam*. Urban promised, as had his predecessors when calling for war, that all those who died would have all their sins forgiven and go instantly to heaven. "Hitherto that way [way of the cross] had been a withdrawal from the world, a renunciation of earthly things in a retreat into the cloister" says Jonathan Riley-Smith (*The Crusaders: A Short History*, Yale University Press, 1987) and quotes from Gibbered of Nogent's chronicle *Gesta Dei per Francos*, Vol 4: "God has instituted in our time holy wars [wrote one contemporary] so that the order of knights and the crowd running in their wake [who] have been engaged in slaughtering one another, might find a new way to gain salvation. And so they are not forced to abandon secular affairs completely...but can attain God's grace... while pursuing their own careers"

It was in November 1095, at the Council of Claremont, that Pope Urban II made his impassioned speech. In *The Sword and The Crescent* (BBC Publications, 1987) Malcolm Phillips, BBC's longtime editor on Religious Affairs, provides the words many researchers accept as accurate. Pope Urban II made a passionate attack against "a people from the kingdom of Persia, a foreign race, a race absolutely alien to God... has invaded the lands of these Christians, has reduced the people with sword, rapine and flame and has carried off some as captive to its own land, has cut down others by pitiable murder and has either completely razed churches of God to ground or enslaved them to the practice of its own rites."

The Zoroastrian Persians had invaded and taken Jerusalem from the Romans. Then the Romans had re-conquered it. Historians believe the Zoroastrians destroyed the Christian monuments between 70 and 79 AD. The Arab Muslims took Jerusalem from the Romans in 644 AD. *All responsible historians agree that when the Christian Patriarch Sophronius invited Caliph Omar to pray inside the Church of Resurrection, Omar declined because he feared all Muslims might feel free to infringe on the Christian sanctity of that Church. Therefore Omar prayed on the steps outside the Church. With a record of such respect for the rights of the "people of the Book" why was the Pope talking in November 1095 about these "fire-*

worshippers...a people from the kingdom of Persia...have invaded the land of these Christians?" The Zoroastrians, as we have seen earlier, believed in One God, but did consider fire to be sacred and still do. But it was centuries ago that the Romans had defeated them and retaken Jerusalem, the Muslims under Omar had taken it from Roman Emperor Heraclius and his huge armies. Yet here we have the Pope in 1095, after more than three hundred years of Muslim rule in next-door Spain, against whose religion of Islam the Church had applied many condemning epithets over the years, about 30 years after Pope Gregory had tried to translate the Qur'an into Latin, after two popes (so far) and many other Catholic clergy had been educated at Muslims schools and universities in Spain, now calling those who occupied Jerusalem in 1095, "a people from the kingdom of Persia" and "fire-worshippers."

There can be only one of two possible reasons for this. One that Pope Urban II's intelligence was highly suspect. Or, after the Church had distorted the religion of Islam in every conceivable way over the years, Pope Urban II now sought to arouse the anger of Europe by suggesting that a pagan people, "fire-worshippers", "absolutely alien to God" had occupied the Holy Land and were massacring Christians and polluting the sacred shrines, not in the past - as the Romans and/or the Zoroastrians are reported by historians to have done - but right now in 1095 A.D.!

## Chapter 4

# The Early Crusades

From what we have reviewed so far, it might seem that, unlike the Christian world, the Muslim world was free of problems and scandals. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Muslim world had become the largest in the world; it had made giant, pioneering strides in all branches of learning, in medicine, and other sciences, literature, in all aspects of civilized living. And it had wealth. But despite all of these advantages, the very fabric of society had been in trouble, especially after the first four Caliphs. Although most advanced civilizations in history had hitherto been Asian, the enclave of Arabian Hejaz was, like so much of Europe, very primitive at the time Muhammad proclaimed the religion of Islam. What makes his success so amazing is that he managed within a few years to convert an extremely barbaric people to reject their primitive, self-indulgent lifestyle and idol-worship, to the belief in One God, prayers five times a day, fasting for a full month from sunrise to sunset, complete prohibition of alcohol (among people who had indulged in it excessively), rigid sexual rules (when absolutely no controls on sexual excesses had prevailed) and a compulsory tax for the support of the poor.

Anyone wishing to be fair to Muslims would recognize that if God wished to convert a society like the Arabs were, He would choose to have His prophet be forceful and not hesitate to take up arms to overcome the huge opposition. The Old Testament tells us that the Hebrew prophets did that more than once. How could a prophet from the same God successfully enforce monotheism and strict regulations on a society as pagan and as barbaric as the Arabs of the Hejaz were?

One example of the type of barbarism that prevailed might suffice. When the early Muslims from Medina had met the pagan Meccan forces in battle the second time, Muhammad's uncle Hamza (who was a Muslim) was killed. After the battle, a Meccan woman Hind, who believed Hamza had killed her father, a Qureishi chief, in the previous battle, rushed to the battlefield where the corpses lay, located Hamza's body, tore it open and chewed on his liver! From such barbarism, Muhammad had created a society in twenty-three years so enthused and dedicated that they were willing to give their lives for their new religion. And, with each

victory, they observed extraordinary clemency towards the foe, as directed by Islam. With passionate zeal, they were able to defeat mighty empires of the time so that within seventy years of Muhammad's death, the Muslim world had spread from the borders of China and India to Spain. And "within twenty-five years after the death of Mohammed, under Ali, the fourth Caliph, the patronage of learning had become a settled principle of the Mohammedan system,"<sup>1</sup> reports Draper. But not all those who professed to have converted had really done so. *Some had converted for material gains, now that Islam ruled their society.*

Even among the genuine Muslims, there had been problems. There were serious dissensions at the choice of the first Caliph (the leader) after Muhammad's death. These dissensions increased greatly when, after the first four Caliphs, Hussein, the Prophet's grandson, his family and 72 supporters were brutally massacred at Khabla by the upstart Caliph Yezid's army. Now that the Muslim state was a large empire, secular ambitions came to the fore all too often. There were caliphs who were moral, pious and just, but many others who indulged themselves as licentiously as any secular monarch, and more. They claimed the title of "caliph," which was intended to be that of the leader of the Muslim community in the secular and religious sense. Islamic directives required a democratic system, but they lived luxuriously (something Prophet Muhammad had severely warned against); many drank liquor regularly, misused the Islamic codes to marry frequently and often, maintained concubines. Originally the word "harem" (harem) was for that part of the household where all the womenfolk lived. Now, in the royal harem, while there was the mother, the sisters and other female relations, all too often there were a vast number of wives and concubines with eunuchs as guards.

Islam had no clergy. It taught that the human was answerable directly to God, not through intermediaries. But qualified theologians did exist, were respected and looked upon for guidance on religious issues. When a degenerate caliph took office, however, problems ensued; he ensured that he gave power to theologians who were weak and/or corrupt. Those who criticized his excesses were dealt with severely. Those who challenged the competence of the caliph to hold that office (as Hussein had done) were killed. A family dynasty had been created now by the Umayyads (the main branch of the Qureshi tribe, who had been the leaders of pre-Islamic Mecca) and the caliphate was passed like a monarchy from father to son, or to another member of the family, as in any secular kingdom. Dissensions and insurrections finally led to the overthrow of the Umayyads by the Abbasides, who also formed dynasty. Dynastic rule had now become a "tradition"; emirates and sultanates (some independent, others under the suzerainty of Caliphs) had been created in the far reaches of the Muslim nation. And more than once, fired up with secular ambitions, they waged wars, but - like many Christian rulers - sought to win public approval for such wars by claiming it was a *Jihad* (holy war) for Islam. As we have seen, Prophet Muhammad had made it clear that the *Jihad* was *only* to be waged when Islam was threatened and if the enemy *sincerely* sued for peace, it must be accepted, as



long as the terms were not to the detriment of Islam. Importantly, *Jihad* on the battlefields was the *Lesser Jihad*. The *Greater Jihad*, he said, was the one every Muslim must wage *within each individual self*, a never-ending *Jihad* throughout one's life, *against evil within ourselves*.

In 750 AD when the Abbasids had overthrown the Umayyads for the caliphate of the main Muslim nation (moving the capital from Damascus to Baghdad) there ensued what is generally described as "the golden age" at least in the secular sense. The dynastic practice continued under the Abbasides. However, there was considerable progress in learning and a return, in some ways, to the original Islamic values. Importantly, unlike the Umayyad's tendency towards Arab chauvinism, there was now an assimilation of ethnic culture, a reinforcement of the Islamic directive that all Muslims, irrespective of race and ethnicity, are equal, and this was very useful, as Persian and later Turkish scholars were given wherewithal and importance. "Under the reign of the Ommiades the studies of the Moslems were confined to the interpretation of the Koran, and the eloquence and poetry of their native tongue" says Gibbon but under the Abbasides, seeking of knowledge spread to wider spheres. Now, the Prophet's directive ("It is the duty of every Muslim man and woman to acquire knowledge," "One learned believer is harder on the devil than a thousand ignorant worshippers," "Seek knowledge even if it be in China") led to a veritable explosion of learning. "Great advances were made in the various arts and sciences, and some theologians explored the esoteric aspects of Islam; mystics produced profound works of philosophy; others, using the best minds, using Arabic, Persian and Turkish languages, sought knowledge everywhere, including the buried Greek learning of centuries past, and that of India and China. So great was the thirst for knowledge now that, some Abbaside caliphs approached some Christian rulers (despite the hostilities that existed) seeking access to some of the ancient pagan literature in their possession, in exchange for gold or as a treaty provision, writes Draper". This "exchange" mostly failed as the Christian rulers either rejected the offer, or had already destroyed that literature at the direction of the Church.

Why were these early Muslims so keen to examine ancient "pagan" literature? Because Islam said God had sent 124,000 prophets over time, that all the people of the world had received God's message at one time or another. Now Muslim scholars were looking at ancient literature because, despite its corruption over time, *it would have the essence of God's message of the time, not to be contemptuously destroyed as "pagan."*

In Muslim Spain, the thirst for knowledge and encouragement of learning was spectacular. Similarly the Fatimides, who had gained control over Egypt, commenced their own campaign for knowledge and discovery. Soon Muslims everywhere commenced huge projects, such as that of comparing ancient Greek philosophy (as these books reflected them) with Islamic philosophy. These comparative works of Ibn Rushd (whose name was later corrupted to Averroes by the West) and Ibn Sina (corrupted to Avicenna by the West) were to be used by the West later during Europe's Renaissance and for centuries thereafter, at European

universities. What had already commenced in the Islamic world from this very early age was a *renaissance of Greek Thought and all world learning* from the earliest times to the present. Scholars of all ethnicity and all religions within the Muslim world were encouraged to participate.

Such was the enthusiasm with which learning and innovations were being pursued in all corners of the Muslim World that even when there was internal political turmoil, the overthrow of the Abbaside regime in a military coup by the Orghuz Turks and then the invasion by the Seljuk Turks who captured Persia as well as the Caliphate in Baghdad, the fervor for learning, though dampened for a while by these horrors was soon resumed. Such was the Muslim determination to keep the fervor of learning alive that when the barbaric Turkish tribes soon realized that in order to be accepted by the Muslim populace as the new rulers, they *had* to become patrons of learning.

Sadly, the original *religious* concept of democratic rule in Islam was already in trouble from the time of the Umayyad dynastic rule. Rival tribes fought and sought power. The determining qualification for rule was now no longer religious piety and seldom intelligence but military strength. And wars were no longer undertaken *only* for justifiable reasons. This led to segmented kingdoms within the Muslim nation, periodically overrun by new, more powerful military force. In Egypt and Persia, authority had been delegated to governors, and in Baghdad itself, Turkish Mamlukes had been imported to be guards and soldiers from Turkistan (ethnically a mixture of Turks, Mongols, Kurds). In 861 A.D. these Mamlukes seized the opportunity of a weakened caliphate, killed the caliph in a military coup. In 867 A.D., another Turk, Ibn Tulun, seized power in Egypt. In 969 A.D. the Turks in Egypt were overthrown by a new Arab dynasty, the Fatimids, originally from Syria, of the Shiite Ismaili movement. Between them and the new Baghdad rulers, there was bitter enmity, and each claimed the religious caliphate of Islam. The Fatimids had, as we have noted, created their own splendid cultural center at Cairo, the city they created. But they indulged in their own secular invasions as well. At one point they even captured Sicily. In Spain, a new, fiery Berber tribe of warriors was to invade (at the invitation of Christian allies) overrun and overthrow the Muslim nation there. Then they too settled down, as had the Seljuk Turks in the East, and became patrons of learning.

In the meanwhile, the Byzantines were responding with their own invasions into Muslim lands; "Between 962 and 1000, Syria was invaded *thirty-eight times* by successive Byzantine emperors" writes Mansfield (*A History of the Middle East*)<sup>3</sup>. In 960 A.D. the Greeks realized that the Muslim empire was in a very weakened state and invaded. And Gibbon punctuates his prejudices with some facts: "In the city of Mopsuestia ... two hundred thousand Moslems were *predestined to death or slavery*...they were surrounded and taken by assault...the mosch [mosque] was converted into a stable; the pulpit was delivered to the flames ... [At Antioch, after] the first tumult of slaughter by the sword [no mention of what was done to the women]; ten thousand youths were led to captivity...and after a licentious possession of ten days, the Romans marched away from the

naked and bleeding city. In their Syrian inroads...more than one hundred cities were reduced to obedience; and eighteen pulpits of the principle moschs [mosques] were committed to the flames to *expiate the sacrilege* of the disciples of Mahomet...the emperor Zimisces encamped in the paradise of Damascus and accepted the ransom of a submissive people...The river [Euphrates] yielded a free passage to the victorious Zimisces; and the historian may imitate the speed with which he overran the once famous cities of Samosata, Edessa, Martyropolis, Amida and Nisibis ... His ardor was quickened by the desire of grasping the virgin treasures of Ecbatana...but the apprehensions of Baghdad were relieved by the retreat of the Greeks; thirst and hunger guarded the desert of Mesopotamia; and the [Byzantine] emperor, satiated with glory, laden with oriental spoils, returned to Constantinople...yet the powers of the East had been bent, not broken, by this transient hurricane. After the departure of the Greeks, the fugitive princes returned to their capitals...the Moslems again purified their temples [sic]...the Nestorians and the Jacobites preferred a *Saracen to an orthodox master*; and the numbers and spirit of the Melchites were inadequate to the support of the church and state. Of these extensive conquests, Antioch, with the cities of Cilicia and the isle of Cyprus, were alone restored, a permanent and useful accession to the Roman empire"<sup>4</sup> is Gibbon's "report" in *The Decline & Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol 6, p. 424-428). Note that every atrocity committed by the Christians is seen by him as God-inspired and worthy of celebration.

Facing this Byzantine mayhem, the Turks managed to get help now from other Muslim rulers. It took a major calamity for Muslim factions to stop warring against each other and face the common enemy. This combined force now responded, pulverizing the Byzantines, (at one point, according to Western sources, they even captured Emperor Alexius for a while) but by 1095 A.D., the Byzantine threat was greatly reduced. So the Muslim rulers promptly returned to rivalries and battles against each other! By this time Turkish forces were soon dangerously weakened, fighting both the Byzantines and fellow-Muslims within Muslim lands. Noting that Muslims on all fronts were weakened and fragmented by internal battles, Persia was now invaded by yet another foreign Turkish force, the Oghuz Turks of central Asian nomads. They conquered Persia, captured the capital of the caliphate in Baghdad in 1050; in 1070 they took Syria and Palestine, forced the Fatimids to withdraw into Egypt.

There was a simple reason why the pursuit of knowledge continued in spite of these military upheavals. The Oghuz Turk invasion had been brutal, spread much destruction and desolation in Persia. But gradually these Turks (now called the Seljuk Turks) became Muslims. Swayed by Muslim respect for learning, they became civilized too. Sadly, by the time they did, the Muslim populace would be subjected to worse brutality in dimensions unparalleled in history, before or since: Christians invaded with their "Crusades" from the West while the barbaric Mongols, their new allies, inflicted monstrous holocausts from the East.

## (2)

When we see the weakened state of the Muslim nation, it is clear why the Pope choose this particular time to call for a crusade. He had waited twenty-five years after the Byzantine emperor called for help. Muslims had been strong in 1070, but so weak and in turmoil by 1095 that the Byzantine itself constantly invaded Muslim lands. In fact, between 962 A.D. and 1000 A.D., the Byzantines had invaded Syria and Palestine thirty-eight times, says Mansfield.<sup>5</sup> By 1095, the Muslims regimes were at war with each other, had become weak. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to assume that after evaluating the real situation in 1095, the Pope determined that this might be the *safest* time to arouse the passions of Christian Europe and attack the Muslims.

The intense passion and urgency for a war against the "fire-worshippers" by Pope Urban II at Claremont achieved that objective. Word spread like wildfire, among the rich and poor. There was, for the knights, another great appeal for a Crusade. "It must be remembered that it was from the East that almost all the luxuries of Western Europe came. It was easy to picture even the arid land of Palestine as being a source of temporal as well as spiritual wealth, especially to the sons of the nobles, who would inherit feudal fiefs," writes Prof. Saunders.

Among the more devout, Peter the Hermit is reported to have been the most passionate. It was Christ who had invited him to lead this War, he said. His sincere emotions, as he informed others of visions he had seen and his choice by Jesus Christ stirred the masses; he traveled across Europe, imploring people to join the Crusade. "Peter wandered through France, attracting followers from all classes of society. Wherever he preached, his listeners were spellbound and reduced to tears, even when he reached Germany where nobody could understand a word he said" writes Armstrong.<sup>6</sup> Two German priests, Folmar and Gottchalk also aroused great passions there, and Count Emich of Leningen modestly announced that he was himself the Last Emperor foretold for the final battle against the Antichrist.

In March 1096, "Peter the Hermit led eastward a band of 10,000 nobles, knights and foot soldiers" with what Armstrong calls "a large crowd of pilgrims". And, she adds "At about the same time, Walter Sansavir of Poissy, a French nobleman, led an army about the same size...shortly afterwards [Count] Emich set out with his huge army of 20,000 men, and two other armies led by Folkmar and Gottchalk started their journey through Eastern Europe towards Constantinople... five more armies were making their preparations at home."<sup>7</sup>

Most Western historians claim that the "First Crusade" was merely the first wave launched by peasants and farmers. Why this defensiveness? Because the first "wave" manifested its barbarism within Europe itself. The hordes of Crusaders, knights and peasants, who moved across Germany towards Constantinople, first decided to vent their passions upon the Jews in the Rhineland. Their religious passions at the peak, they felt these "Christ-killers" must be made to pay their retribution. They reportedly killed all the Jews in Worms (except for



twelve who managed to escape) and 1,000 in Mainz; having killed them, they took all of their possessions, provisions and valuables, to sustain themselves on their outward journey for the liberation of the Holy Land. Chroniclers hasten to add that it was Count Emich and Count Dithmar who led this massacres and looting, not Peter the Hermit. On the other hand, according to Armstrong, "The only thing we do know about the content of Peter the Hermit's sermons [calling people to the Crusades] was that it was anti-Semitic, because in March 1096 his large army of Crusaders attacked the Jewish communities of France and Lorraine." Next the Crusaders charged into Bulgaria, attacked and looted the inhabitants there, reports Saunders.<sup>8</sup> *These victims were not Jews but Christians and they were attacked to be looted.* The Crusaders next intended victims were the Hungarians. But the forewarned Hungarians had already prepared their defenses; "They [Hungarians] would not even allow [Count] Emich's army to enter their country. Emich's Crusaders tried to force their way in and they besieged the city of Weisenburg for six weeks," says Armstrong.

By now, the Crusaders, much richer but weary from all the fighting in Europe, reached the Byzantine Empire. Some had already decided to turn back and return home, but a large number now attacked Nish, in Byzantium. Some apologists claim they were trying to buy food, but others admit they were continuing with pillage. But the local Byzantines fought them off. When they finally reached Constantinople, "the Emperor Alexius, who had asked [Pope] Urban for a conventional army, gazed at these huge masses of Crusaders and pilgrims in horror and swiftly conveyed them out over the Bosphorus and into Asia Minor."<sup>9</sup> By the time he did so, they had already conducted more pillage and looting within his empire. That killing and looting continued, of course, with increased vigor, in Turkish territory.

The Turks were taken completely by surprise and the Crusaders met with great success initially. *Ironically many Christian in Turkey were the Crusaders' early victims, because the Crusaders did not recognize these Christians in Turkish territories as Christians.* Fired up by the propaganda they had heard in Europe all their lives, they could not conceive of Christians actually living normal lives in Muslim lands. Therefore they took all civilians in these lands to be Muslims, worthy of being killed and looted.

The ultimate irony of these armies of Crusaders descending upon Muslim lands to "liberate" the Christians was that the Christians living in Muslim lands were very happy to be there, under Muslim rule. *They preferred it to Catholic or Orthodox rule, under which they had suffered, in much the same way as the Coptic Christian in Egypt had welcomed Muslim rule when the Muslims first came centuries ago.* Prof. Runciman reports that "The Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch, Michael the Syrian writing five centuries later, in the days of the Latin kingdoms, reflected the old tradition of his people when he told that 'the God of vengeance, who alone is the Almighty... raised from the south the children of Ishmael to deliver us by them from the hands of the Romans'." This deliverance, he added, "was no light advantage to us". The Nestorians [Christians] echoed this sentiment. "The hearts of the Christians" wrote an anonymous chronicler [*Chronicle of Seert* pt. II, in Patrologia

*Orientalis* vol. XIII } rejoiced at the domination of the Arabs - may God strengthen it and prosper it" (italics added)

"Even the orthodox, finding themselves spared the persecution that they had feared and paying taxes that, in spite of the *jizya* demanded [by Muslims] from the Christians, were far lower than in Byzantine times, showed small inclination to question their destiny... Unlike the Christian Empire, which attempted to enforce religious uniformity on all its citizens - an ideal never realized - the Arabs, like the Persians before them, were prepared to accept religious minorities, provided they were People of the Book" says Steven Runciman in his three-volume work *The History of the Crusades* (Cambridge University Press, 1951). He also quotes Patriarch Theodorus, (Vol I, p 271).

"To many of the Christians of the Near East, indeed Muslim rule had been far preferable to Christian rule of Byzantine or Rome. Many of them belonged to the heretical sects, such as the Nestorians and the Monophysites who could expect only prosecution from the Orthodox Christian government. *Even an Orthodox might prefer Muslim rule*; in the ninth century, the Patriarch (Theodosius) of Jerusalem could write to the overlords: 'They [Muslims] are just and show us no violence'. No minority in the West could have said the same." Runciman<sup>10</sup> provides the full Theodosius quote.

Now, as the Crusaders attacked the Turks, the latter were taken completely by surprise at the start. But then "The Turks were forced to take counter-measures," writes Martin Scott, "an army of highly trained soldiers was sent against the crusaders and the inevitable happened: the entire crusading army, still numbering perhaps twenty thousand men, was destroyed."

"The chroniclers did not approve of these first crusaders and either omitted all mention of them in their account of the First Crusade or dismissed them in their account as a mob of fanatics and peasants" (Armstrong)<sup>11</sup>. In fact, "avoiding all mention" also avoided not only the barbarism, but also the question: "If a crusading army was the will of God, how could it fail? This terrible defeat at the hands of Eastern Europeans [Hungarians] and the infidels in Turkey was not the prestigious victory that the West was looking for. The [First] Crusaders were disowned and a popular legend of a 'Peasants' Crusade' grew up, quite at variance with the facts."<sup>12</sup>

Now, some three months later (in September 1095), there was the second onslaught by the Crusaders, led by Count Bohemund of Taranto, whose father Robert Guiscard had in fact invaded and attempted to conquer the Byzantine Empire for himself, and failed. "The Crusade was an obvious way for Bohemund to acquire an Eastern kingdom" explains Armstrong.<sup>13</sup> There was Godfrey of Bouillon, "like Bohemund, Godfrey had practical reasons for going on the Crusade, as there was no future for him in the West," though he was a descendant of Charlemagne (ibid). His brother Baldwin took his wife and children on the Crusade with him, clearly intending to live there on conquered lands. There were sincere Christians too, like Robert of Normandy, eldest son of William the Conqueror; "his father favored his younger brother William Rufus and the two were constantly at war." While Robert was involved in this Crusade, his brother seized the English throne when their father died, and Robert was put in prison on his return says Armstrong.<sup>14</sup>

"In Constantinople the Crusaders entered a different world and they gazed in astonishment at its palaces, churches and gardens, for there was as yet nothing as sophisticated and advanced in Europe...for their part the Greeks were horrified by the Franks and their talk of the holiness of war...[the Greeks] could only see these Western Christians as ignorant barbarians," says the candid Armstrong.<sup>15</sup> Emperor Alexius, seeing them and their crude behavior, insisted that they take an oath that they would return all conquered Byzantine territory to him. "Eventually the Crusaders took the oath, but in the event showed little scruple about breaking it at the earliest opportunity...The Franks revealed themselves as ignorant and uncouth." Even when taking the oath, one of the knights arrogantly went and sat on Alexius' throne, until he was rebuked and made to get up. After the oath they were shipped across the Bosphorus to attack the Turks. Note that by "Franks", historians mean all the Crusaders in these reports.

Turkish Sultan Arslan I now had a peace treaty with the Byzantines' eastern border. His main concern was at the Egyptian border, with his frequent hostilities with the Caliphate there, and he was deeply concerned about the new developments in Baghdad where the nomadic tribe called Oghuz Turks (later known as Seljuks) had already invaded and controlled half the Abbasid kingdom. When the Crusaders attacked his capital Nicea, the Turks, relying on their treaty with the Byzantines, had forces in the east and south. Prof. Scott reports that initially the Turks may have also mistaken the Crusaders for pilgrims, as Christian pilgrims normally came that way. Then, after defeating the first wave of Crusaders thoroughly, they did not expect another invasion so soon. So the new wave of Crusaders quickly conquered some Turkish cities. Noting the barbarism of the Crusaders, some more Turkish cities instantly surrendered to Alexius, who would not allow the Crusaders to loot, which infuriated the Crusaders.<sup>16</sup> The Crusaders now proceeded eastward, and God helped them says their chronicler Raymund of Argiles. Two pagan knights in shiny armor came to help them "as they were so far from their own patron saints, God had sent the local soldier-saints George and Demetrius to help them." So St. George became a very popular saint in the West.

The Crusaders had split into two huge armies, one proceeding under Bohemund and Raymund to conquer Antioch, another under Baldwin and his nephew Tancred to invade Cilicia; after a few conquests, massacring the Muslim inhabitants, Baldwin proceeded towards the Armenian city of Edessa, Armenian King Toros, who "was anxious to get rid of the Turks," enthusiastically joined Baldwin's Crusaders. Under their combined attack "the Muslim garrisons either fled or were massacred by the Armenians and the Franks together."<sup>17</sup> Armenia was currently under the Turks; it had previously been under the Byzantines. They had no desire to return to the Byzantine Empire and so "Baldwin seemed an answer to Toros' prayer and he [Toros] adopted the imposing Frank as his son in a strange ceremony [rubbing chests under a large shirt]...yet under most suspicious circumstances, Toros was murdered on March 10 [twenty days later] and Baldwin became head of [the Armenian] state." (ibid). He conquered Samosata from the Turks and added it to his principality. "There was no thought of returning this

new territory to the Emperor [Alexius]" (ibid) though Baldwin had promised Alexius under oath he would.

By now the Crusading armies had reached Antioch. There were deep emotions involved with regaining this city from the Turks — Christians believed it was where St. Peter had been the first bishop, and from where Christianity had spread. After killing some of the advance Turkish guards who protected Antioch, there was a standoff, as the Crusaders tried for several months to find ways to invade the highly fortified city. Some Crusaders died of hunger, according to reports, others resorted to cutting flesh from the bodies of dead Muslims killed in their skirmishes with the Crusaders and drinking their blood and that of animals. "According to [chronicler] Fulcher of Chartres [in 1098], food was once again desperately short: 'Many of our people...cut pieces from the buttocks of the Saracens [Muslims] already dead there, which they cooked, but when it was not yet roasted enough on the fire, they devoured it with a savage mouth'," writes Malcolm Billings in *The Cross and the Crescent*, BBC Publications, 1987).<sup>18</sup>

Peter the Hermit had returned for this second phase of the Crusade. But now, faced with death from hunger, the religious zealot could not take it. "In January [1097] Peter the Hermit deserted the army," reports Armstrong.<sup>19</sup> He was brought back, but not punished for his attempted desertion. Everything looked hopeless for the Crusaders, however, when Peter Bartholomew, a servant of Raymund of Gilles said he had seen a vision in which St. Andrew took him inside Antioch and into St. Peter Cathedral, showing him where a sacred lance (believed to be taken from Jesus' body) was located. With that lance, the enemy could be defeated. There was skepticism about this, as the lance believed to be from Jesus' body was known to be in Constantinople. Also, the Crusaders at first could not get inside to the sword, so this dream would not solve their problems. But then on June 2, Captain Firouz, an Armenian Christian, who was stationed inside Antioch, became the Crusaders' spy. He let them in by the Tower of the Two Sisters. The Turks were taken by surprise. The Crusaders looted and pillaged the city. "The starving Crusaders even ransacked the houses of the Armenian Christians as well as the Muslims, and the streets were filled with dead bodies. Against all odds, the Crusaders had managed to liberate the venerable Christian city," says Armstrong.<sup>20</sup>

Soon, however, Turkish reinforcements arrived. Then Stephen of Valence saw another vision. Now there were two visionaries and they convinced the leaders to search for that sacred lance. The Christian chroniclers say they found it and with it, they were able to defeat and kill all the Turks, with the help of St. George, St. Demetrius and St. Mercury who, the Crusaders were convinced, had all joined in the fighting for the Crusaders. The Crusaders were now certain they "must be God's new chosen people; they had taken up the vocation that the Jews had lost. The Franks had indeed found their new Christian mission," writes Armstrong.<sup>21</sup> The lance was to be cherished and carried in other battles until it was lost or disappeared.

By the time the Crusaders reached Jerusalem, their brutality was well known. "These ironclad giants from the West [wearing suits of armor, which the Muslims



did not] looked like monsters to the Turks and the Arabs, who had heard stories about their cannibalism. *The amirs and rulers of the cities* [that they passed through] granted them free passage and supplies, begging only that they might be spared" says Armstrong.

On June 7, 1099 the Crusaders were outside Jerusalem. By July 15, according to the chroniclers, the city had fallen to them. "For two days, they fell upon the Muslim and Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem. They killed all the Saracens and the Turks they found" say the author of the *Gesta*, "they killed everyone whether male or female."<sup>22</sup> The *Gesta Francorum* was a "chronicle" written to glorify the Crusaders and their exploits. Just as the *Song of Roland* had made up false stories to glorify Charlemagne and Roland's supposed exploits in Spain, the *Gesta* consisted of remarkable fantasies and inaccuracies. And, like the *Song of Roland*, the *Gesta* also became very popular in Europe, its contents taken as "facts" by millions. "He [its author] seems to think, mistakenly, that the Turks had been Christians at one time."<sup>23</sup> This could have been part of the ludicrous mythology that, as we have seen, had been circulating as "history" in Christendom for many years, which said that Prophet Muhammad had been a Christian Cardinal and angry at not being made Pope, he had invented Islam!

The *Gesta* and chroniclers rejoice in how the Crusaders killed "the Saracens and the Turks." Armstrong provides a sample from that of Raymund of Arguiles, in which he says: "Wonderful sights were to be seen. Some of our men...cut off the heads of their enemies; others shot them with arrows; others tortured them longer by casting them into the flames. Piles of head, hands and feet were to be seen in the streets of the city. It was necessary to pick one's way over the bodies of men and horses. But these were small matters compared to what happened at the Temple of Solomon... What happened there? If I tell the truth it will exceed your powers of belief...men rode in blood up to their knees and bridal reins. Indeed it was a just and splendid judgment of God that this place should be filled with the blood of the unbelievers."<sup>24</sup>

"The day after the massacre, crusaders climbed to the roof of Al-Aqsa and in cold blood they killed a group of Muslims to whom Tancred had given sanctuary... They [Muslims] were polluting this Holy City and had to be eliminated like vermin, and from this point in the jargon of crusading the word given to Muslims is 'vermin'... the soldiers of Christ killed some 40,000 Muslims in two days."<sup>25</sup> "A new day, a new joy ..." added chronicler Raymund of Arguiles, "This day, I say, will be famous in all future ages, for it turned our labors and sorrows into joy and exultation; this day, I say, marks the justification of all Christianity, the humiliation of Paganism, the renewal of our faith." The new Pope Pascall II (Urban died two weeks after the massacre at Jerusalem) wrote that the Crusaders had fulfilled the ancient biblical prophecies.<sup>26</sup>

Godfrey of Buillon, as a descendant of Charlemagne, was made Defender of the Holy Sepulcher. And now, "people in Europe were gripped by a new passion for crusading... there was talk of conquering Egypt, Asia, Africa and Ethiopia."

Some of the devout Crusaders did not get the rewards they expected. Robert of Normandy, the son of William the Conqueror of England, the older son, lost the crown to his brother William Rufus. "The chroniclers were not sympathetic to Robert's plight" says Armstrong. Robert in fact was thrown in prison by his brother and died there. But with the conquests from that Crusade "for the next fifty years, crusading would be a central preoccupation and a popular pursuit in Europe...thousands of men and women, who had not thought of going crusading before now joined the three armies, inspired by the victory of 1099," says Armstrong.<sup>27</sup>

"But this time the Turks of Syria and Asia Minor were ready for them". As usual, the Muslims fought each other and joined hands only when the foreign crisis became very critical. The three armies sent for this Crusade were crushed, but having tasted blood, in more ways than one, the enthusiasm for Crusading could not be dampened with defeat. "Smaller crusading expeditions were undertaken in Palestine and in Muslim Spain throughout the next twenty years of the new century." Three learned monk-historians Gibbered of Nogent, Robert the Monk and Baldrick of Bourgeuil "see the Crusade as a full-scale biblical war...In this canonization of holy violence, there is no longer any vagueness about the Muslims. They are a 'vile' and 'abominable' race, absolutely alien to God' and meat only for 'extermination'... the official Church had accepted the violence of Joshua and canonized it" (ibid). Robert the Monk wrote that "there is no more holy event since the creation of the world and the Crucifixion" than the Crusade. "Now by fighting and killing Muslims the Crusaders had discovered a 'new way of gaining salvation' Gibbered [of Nogent] explained...The Crusade had canonized violence and made it a Christian vocation".<sup>28</sup>

In 1108, knights who called themselves the Poor Fellow Soldiers of Jesus Christ came to Jerusalem and became the police force. The *al-Aqsa mosque*, built by Caliph Omar, had now been converted by the Crusaders into a royal palace, and this became their headquarters; they became known as the Knights of the Temple or the Templars (as we have seen earlier, it was the site where Solomon's temple had stood before the Zoroastrians had reportedly demolished it). The Templars had been dedicated initially to the poor and the needy, and bound by monastic vows and rules. Like the Knights Hospitaller of St. John, an order created by the Pope, they were dedicated to the same principles and vows of poverty and the needy. But they "quickly became a very large and very rich order, with houses in Europe as well as in the Holy Land" says Armstrong. Ruthless and efficient, "soon they became the regular army of the Holy Land... They built their own castles or took over and adapted old Muslim castles...[soon] the kings of Jerusalem turned their castles over to the Templars and the Hospitallers...these monks were pushing aggressively against the frontiers of Islam and were in the front line of the holy war." Invading other Muslim lands were by now commonplace. "They had pushed the frontiers of the Crusader kingdom over the Jordan [river]...and northward into Lebanon and Syria" by the middle of the twelfth century.<sup>29</sup>

Godfrey of Bouillon had died in 1099 and was succeeded by his brother Baldwin (who had made himself the king of Armenia). Baldwin came to Jerusalem in 1100, was crowned king; and had turned oriental in dress and lifestyle, as had his court: "the Franks of Palestine learned how to adapt to life in the East, learned to take baths, to build in the Arab fashion, and learned important lessons of Arab hygiene". They took local women as wives, "The colonialists has now become almost a native and the immigrant is one of the inhabitants," wrote chronicler Fulcher of Chartres reports Armstrong (p. 187).

"Certainly Western pilgrims and crusaders from Europe were shocked when they arrived in the Holy Land...Most worrying, they [local Europeans] had, over the years, developed quite a different attitude towards the Muslims. Familiarity and daily contacts with Muslims meant that they could not subscribe to the European tendency to imagine the Saracens as inhuman monsters of evil...The [newly-arrived] Europeans were horrified because they adhered to the absolute policy... it was a fight of good versus evil, of God against Devils."

The Muslims found it hard believe that the followers of Jesus would conduct such barbaric slaughter. "Indeed it was quite a long time before they [the common Muslim people] understood that the Crusade itself was in fact a Christian holy war". Among the thousands massacred by the Crusaders, when they attacked Jerusalem and took it, had been (according to twelfth century Arab historian Ibn al-Athir, quoted by Armstrong) "a large number of Muslim scholars and ascetics 'who had left their homelands to live lives of pious seclusion in the Holy Place.'"<sup>30</sup>

Nothing was done even when a few Muslims who had escaped the massacre at Jerusalem and reached Damascus related the gory details of the brutal massacre. Muslim rulers were trying to decide between their internal dissensions against one another and the Crusader menace. Noting this, more Crusaders came and conquered. In 1104, the Franks seized Haifa, Jaffa, Acre, and seemed all set to take Baghdad itself (the seat of the caliphate). This time they met resistance and had to turn to Harran. "More Palestinians were massacred and refugees crowded into neighboring Muslim cities like Aleppo." In 1109 the Crusaders took Tripoli and seized Beirut and Sidon the next year. They now had a fourth state in the Near East.

In 1111 A.D., the Qadi of Aleppo led a demonstration to Baghdad to force the Sultan to act. The Sultan was forced to send an army under the Amir of Mosul against the Franks, but it was a feeble response. The Muslim leaders "were prepared to use warlike rhetoric against the Franks to appease the populace but had no intention of enhancing the power of a fellow Muslim ruler by making an alliance with him."

Finally, in 1128, there was a change in attitude. The Sultan of Rum appointed Turkish commander Zangi as Atabeg of Mosul and Aleppo, and gave him control over all of Syria and northern Iraq. Zangi was not a religious man, but he lived frugally, was forceful and brought military discipline upon the Muslim forces. As Zangi's power grew, the Amir of Damascus, afraid of losing power to Zangi, made an alliance with the Christian King Baldwin of Jerusalem.

Zangi was determined to take Damascus. With this in view, he attacked Edessa, the Christian city (the Amir's ally) in 1144. In the ensuing battle he defeated

the Christians. It was the first major setback to the Christians, and the morale of the Muslim forces and the populace soared. They even dared to hope that somehow the Crusading invaders could even be ousted from all the territories they had conquered. Though Zangi was, reportedly, not a religious man, he was now called "the pillar of religion." Enthusiastically, the forces prepared under Zangi to take on the Christian forces of Jerusalem. But then, someone in his own entourage who was of Frankish origin, murdered Zangi. Zangi's son Mahmoud was made leader. Unlike his father, he was religious (called Nur ad-Din or Light of the Faith). And he was a scholar. At each stage "scholars would interpret the political and military situation [for him] in the light of Islamic law," says Armstrong.

There are strict rules laid down in the Quran on what can and cannot be done in a Jihad. "The Koran is clear that, although war is always abhorrent, Muslims sometimes had a duty to fight oppression and persecution, because [otherwise] all decent values would disappear from the earth (2:252)" (ibid). In another passage the Quran says "Permission to fight is granted to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged — Allah indeed had power to help them — to those who have been driven from their homes unjustly only because they said 'Our Lord is Allah'...If Allah did not repel aggression by means of those who fight against it, there would surely have been demolished cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft commemorated" (Armstrong quotes Quran 22:40-42, then adds, "The above quotation shows that synagogues and churches as well as mosques were to be respected by Muslims. This jihad was a holy war of self-defiance. The Quran forbids Muslims to initiate war and strike the first blow (Koran: 2:19), but goes on to say that 'persecution is worse than killing' and oppression must be stopped. For fifty years the Franks had massacred Muslims and driven them from their homes. The Muslims had done nothing to provoke this gratuitous Western aggression and their apathy in the face of this scourge had only made matters worse. A Muslim leader had a clear duty to protect his people from such an enemy... It was obvious that the Muslim ideal of holy war is very different from the Crusade; it is essentially defensive."

Now Nur ad-Din organized a campaign of public education about jihad, when it can be waged and just what the Crusaders had done and were doing to millions of Muslims in their homes. Religious clerics were asked to speak about this in mosques. "Muslims do not expect God to suspend the normal course of nature for their sakes but believe that God will only help them if they have made every possible human effort to help themselves. 'Verily' says the Koran, 'God will not change the state of a people unless they change the state of their own selves' (13:11)."<sup>31</sup>

### (3)

Western historians and scholars, following the pattern set over the centuries by their chroniclers, have carefully separated the Crusades into the First, Second, Third and so on, to suggest that these Crusades were undertaken in response to some act of the Muslims. In reality, from the time of the first massacre of Muslims



by the Crusaders in 1096, *these invasions had never ceased*, merely differed in the number of armies that responded to the passionate calls for a Crusade by Christian religious leaders and secular rulers. There was a constant flow of Crusaders from Europe and they fought Muslims to conquer more Muslim lands. But historians like Runciman feel that because these European armies were individual expeditions, undertaken by individual lords and knights, they should *not* be counted as part of the official eight crusades.

The simple fact is that whether Muslims were massacred and looted periodically during these fifty years by the Franks who already ruled Jerusalem and conquered more lands, or by the new Crusading armies, big or small, they were still massacred and looted by Crusaders.

The first Muslim organized response to these most recent invasions and conquests was the Muslim victory at Edessa. As soon as the news reached Europe, the Pope made an impassioned appeal for another "official" Crusade. Pope Eugenius called for it, but the one who aroused fanatical passions at least as much as Pope Urban II had in 1095 was Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux. In his first address on March 31, 1146, Bernard told a vast assembly of French barons that the fall of Edessa to the Muslims was part of God's plan, to arouse Christendom to greater efforts to vanquish the Muslim devils completely. "Bernard was probably the most powerful man in Europe at that time. The King of France was in his thrall and the Pope a member of his religious order. He owed a great deal of his power to his [Bernard's] charismatic eloquence."<sup>32</sup> Bernard chastised the lords and knights, then entreated them "to stop killing each other and join forces against Islam...great sinners would also benefit...because they would receive remission of all their sins...Instead of seeing Muslims as mere filth, they were now simply tools used and created by God to save His people's souls."<sup>33</sup>

"Europe was a very different place from the Europe of 1095."<sup>34</sup> The education and — in many cases — wealth, which Europeans had acquired from their Crusades in the Middle East and into Spain, had caused them to become gradually more civilized in their daily life and some, even in hygiene, than they had been. And while religion was still primarily a matter of passionate righteousness with the sword, rather than the pen (especially as so very few Europeans were literate) there continued to be, among some Christians, a trend towards a more spiritual approach. The Benedictine order of monks, with its simpler and less elaborate structure was more appealing to this minority than the Cluny order whose priests, now that they were rich and powerful, had become too worldly in their tastes and far less spiritual than they had been at the start. The Cistercian order, which now emerged from this esoteric minority of the clergy was to become the most powerful institution in twelfth century Europe. Bernard belonged to it. He was an enigmatic character, however, spiritual in some ways, ruthlessly brutal in others. Seeing in scholar Peter Abelard (of the tragic love affair with Heloise) a rival for the hearts of the young, he succeeded in having him declared a heretic, his books burned by the Pope himself. Abelard died shortly thereafter. Bernard "never considered approaching the Muslims as a peaceful missionary and converting them. The only

solution to the 'pagan' problem was the holy war...The Muslims were not real to him." Now, like Peter the Hermit had, in arousing emotions for the First Crusade, Bernard toured Europe, using his eloquence to stir the mass to a crusade. "*The Germans responded ecstatically, even though they could not understand a word he said,*" just as they had done to Peter the Hermit. Greatly encouraged, Bernard sent an army from Frankfurt to fight and Christianize the Slavs and the Wends; he sent another army to the Iberian peninsulas. "They managed to conquer Lisbon and there was a massacre of the Muslim population," reports Armstrong.<sup>35</sup> By now Bernard had browbeaten the aged, reluctant Conrad, the German King, into going on the Crusade to the Holy Land himself. King Louis VII of France had needed little coaxing. On the way to the Holy Land, the Crusaders descended, as before, upon the Jews in the Rhine Valley and massacred more of them, says Armstrong. This seemed to be pure routine for any major Crusade: start by killing Jews in Europe, pillaging Christians in European cities on the way East before descending upon Byzantium and loot, pillage that Eastern Christian Empire before proceeding on the Holy Crusade to the Holy Land to kill and take Muslim lands.

Bernard was convinced that hate towards the Muslims (though not, it is said, towards the Jews) was an inherent part of Christianity. He proclaimed that Christians going now to kill Muslims would be victorious in this world and rewarded in the next. He said the average Christians needed to qualify for heaven by killing the Muslim devils, while the clergy qualified through esoteric and mystical Christianity. "Now Bernard taught that the Christian monasteries were holier than the Holy City itself... When Bernard spoke of the 'heavenly Jerusalem' he did not mean the city described in the Revelations [in the Bible] that would descend to earth at the end of time. He used the phrase as a symbol of that union with God that the Christian was striving to attain in prayer. *It followed that this mystical state was far more 'holy' than any earthly city, no matter how deeply associated with Christ.*"

Why then was he so passionate about another Crusade to kill the Muslims? Because Bernard believed that "*the layman could not achieve contact with God by means of contemplation, because this esoteric mysticism was only for the Christian elite, but he [the lay Christian] could take part in another secondary but very important Christian task in the Crusade. Crusading [i.e., killing Muslims] was very central to Bernard's political vision of Christianity.*"<sup>36</sup>

The most powerful selling point to stir the masses for the Crusades was now, as it had always been, that the Muslim barbarians wanted to attack and destroy Christendom. The European populace was very willing to believe this. "Although neither the Byzantines nor the Muslims had any designs on Europe, the massive power of these oriental empires made Europeans assume that they were just biding their time before they invaded and conquered their lands," says Armstrong. In one version of Urban II's call to the Crusades in 1095, (according to the version of his speech provided in 1125 by English historian William of Malmesbury), he too had stressed the need to make war upon the "fire-worshippers" to safeguard Christendom before they attacked, and conquered little Europe. "For three hundred years they

have held Spain and the Balearic islands, and they live in hope of devouring the rest," said Pope Urban II in this version. To Europeans, historically warlike, the strong *must* always wish to conquer the weak. *They themselves would certainly invade and take all the lands they could if they had the power. Therefore, the Muslims must want the same thing they did.*

As we have seen, Prof. Draper reported that Count Julian, governor of Cueto, himself a Goth, had pleaded with Emir Musa (in present-day Morocco) to invade Spain and overthrow Gothic King Roderic who had raped Julian's daughter. Also, as we have seen, some of the later invaders like the second invasion by the Muslim Berbers of Spain, had been at the invitation of some Christian princelings, and these rough warlike "Muslim" invaders fought the previous Muslim rulers and conquered much of Spain from them. In time, they had settled to become able administrators themselves, respecting other faiths, encouraging the pioneering scholastic works; and once settled, they were once again very cordial relations between many Christian princelings in Spain and the Muslim nation there. Internal political strife continued in Muslim and Christian Spain, leading to alliances between factions, regardless of their religious beliefs. The Mediterranean countries and towns, north and south of the waters, had, for centuries, invaded, ruled and were overthrown before religion came to be associated with such activities; even in recent centuries, alliances and hostilities existed between groups, often irrespective of their religious affiliations in Spain after the Arab-Berber conquest.

As Dr. Henry Charles Lea writes in *A History of the Inquisition of Spain* "the ceaseless civil wars on both sides [Christian and Muslim] caused each to have constant recourse to those of hostile faith for aid or shelter, and the relations which grew up, although transitory and shifting, became so intricate that little difference between Christian and Moor could often be recognized by statesmen. Thus mutual toleration could not fail to establish itself, to the scandal of Crusaders, who came to help the one side, and of the hordes of fresh fanatics who poured over from Africa to assist the other."\*

Lea adds "This constant mingling of Spaniard and Moor meets us at every step in Spanish history. Perhaps it would be too much to say, with Dozy [in *Recherches*], that a 'Spanish knight of the Middle Ages fought neither for his country nor for his religion; he fought, like the Cid, to get something to eat, whether under a Christian or Mussulman prince' and 'the Cid himself was rather a Mussulman than a Catholic' though Philip II endeavored to have him canonized — but there can be no question that religious zeal had little to do with the Reconquest. In the adventurous career of the Cid, Christians and Moslems are seen to mingle in both contending armies, and it is for the most part impossible to detect in the struggle any interest either of race or religion. *This had long been customary.* Towards the end of the ninth century,

\* Note the choice of words: the Crusaders came to "help" the Christian forces, whereas the Muslims who came to help "the others" were "fresh hoards of fanatics."

Bermudo, brother of Alfonso III, for seven years held Astorga with the aid of the Moors, to whom he fled for refuge when finally dislodged. About 940 we find a King Aboahia, a vassal of Abderhaman of Cordova, transferring allegiance to Ramiro II and then returning to his former lord, and some fifteen years later when Sancho I was ejected by a conspiracy, he took refuge with Abderhaman, by whose aid he regained his kingdom, the usurper Ordonez, in turn flying to [Muslim] Cordova, where he was hospitably received. About 990, Bermudo II gave his sister as wife to the Moorish King of Toledo, resulting in an unexpected miracle. In the terrible invasion of Almanzor, in 997, which threatened destruction of the Christians, we are told that numerous exiled Christian nobles accompanied him. Alfonso VI of Castile, when overcome by his brother, Sancho II, sought asylum, until the death of the latter, in Toledo, a hospitality which he subsequently repaid by conquering the city and kingdom; his court was semi-oriental; during his exile he had become familiar with Arabic; in his prosperity he gathered around him Saracen poets and sages, and among his numerous successive wives was Zaida, daughter of Al-Mutamid, King of Seville. His contemporary, Sancho I of Aragon, was equally given to Moslem culture habitually".<sup>37</sup>

And, Lea adds, "In 1270, when Alfonso X had rendered himself unpopular by releasing Portugal from vassalage to Leon, his brother, the Infante Felipe, their first thought was to obtain an alliance with Abu Yusuf, King of Morocco, who had gladly promised them assistance...In 1282 Sancho IV revolted against his father and was supported by the Kings of Granada, Portugal, Aragon and Knavery. Alfonso X in his destitution sent his crown to Abu Yusuf and asked for a loan on it as a pledge. The chivalrous Moslem at once sent him 60,000 doblas and followed this by coming with a large force of horse and foot, where Sancho entered into alliance with Granada and a war ensued with Christians and Moors on both sides till the death of Alfonso settled the question of the succession."<sup>38</sup>

#### (4)

In May 1147, Conrad and his huge German army (some claimed it was a million) marched towards Constantinople, after killing, looting and pillaging in eastern Europe. On June 8, the French army with Louis VII (carrying a Cross) set out too. He took his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine, reportedly a beautiful, intelligent and sophisticated woman, with him.

Once in Byzantium, these Crusaders, as before, went wild again. Conrad's army "pillaged disgracefully once on Byzantine territory, and on one occasion, Frederick of Swabia killed all Greek monks in a monastery near Adrianople. When the [Byzantine] Emperor Manuel, not unnaturally, remonstrated with him Conrad simply retorted that after the crusade he would return and attack Byzantium himself. Once they had crossed the Bosphorus [into Turkish territory], the Crusaders continued their career of looting and vandalism".<sup>39</sup> Of course this "looting and vandalism" was followed by the massacre of Muslim inhabitants.



However, now these Crusaders faced sudden winter storms and torrential floods, which swept away hundreds of the Crusaders. The delay gave the Turks, again taken by surprise, time to prepare. They leveled the countryside. Soon the Crusaders suffered from lack of provisions, and in subsequent battles; the Turks trounced them.

In February 1148, the remaining Crusading armies struggled back to the Byzantium port of Attalia, camping outside the city. Emperor Manuel was not at all happy to see them back. In fact, after the horrors of the looting and pillaging that the Crusaders had inflicted before on Byzantium, the Emperor had taken some precautionary steps. *He had made a treaty with Mas'ud, the Sultan of Rum.* When the Crusaders had now arrived from Europe and commenced to loot and pillage as before, he had almost felt inclined to seek the Sultan's help. It was one of the most ironic facts of history: the Crusades had originally been commenced ostensibly to help the Byzantium Christians against the Muslims. *In reality, the Byzantines were more afraid of the Crusaders' barbarism than of the Muslims, and were now even making treaties with Muslims to protect themselves against the Crusaders!*

But with the Crusaders returning now at his doorstep and in desperate straits, Emperor Manuel felt sorry for them, and arranged for them to have provisions. "Instead of appreciating this, the Crusaders simply accused the Greeks of treachery... Hostility to Byzantium had long been crucial to the Western identity but during the Second Crusade it reached new heights. [Chronicler] Odo's measured and elegant pen drips venom every time he mentions the Greeks: he was convinced that the West should send another Crusade to attack Constantinople. Odo seems to hate the [Christian] Greeks more than the Muslims," writes Armstrong

Now, to rid themselves of these wild Crusaders, the Greeks provided ships to take them to the Holy Land. But there was not enough room for the huge armies. So these pious leaders of the Crusades came to a remarkable decision: "Only the knights, the noblemen and some of the infantry could sail. The rest of the foot soldiers and the huge mass of French and German pilgrims were abandoned with their wives and children outside Attalia. Thus they disappeared from history, betrayed by their brothers"<sup>40</sup>. No one truly knows what happened to them, though stories generated later that the Turks had either killed them or sold them into slavery. *Certainly such speculations helped the Crusaders to deflect public anger away from themselves for their own selfishness.*

The Crusaders now stopped in Antioch; here, Louis's wife Queen Eleanor and Raymond of Antioch (her uncle) renewed their old incestuous affair. It became so flagrant that "Louis forcibly abducted her at night, bundled her on board ship and set sail for Acre."<sup>41</sup> *Eleanor was later to marry King Henry of England and give birth to Richard "the Lionheart."*

When the Crusaders reached the Holy Land they were flabbergasted. "Pilgrims and Crusaders from the West were always shocked to see the Palestinian Franks' luxurious and oriental lifestyle and to discover that they had Muslim friends and that some of the lower orders had married oriental women and

produced a *race of half-castes*. King Louis must have been horrified to learn that the King of Jerusalem actually had a treaty with the Amir of Damascus against Nur ad-Din." To prove that religious zeal was stronger than their own oath, the Crusaders now joined the Franks of Jerusalem to attack their Muslim ally Damascus, and renege on that treaty.

When his Christian allies attacked Amir Muin ad-Din Unur of Damascus, he frantically turned to Nur ad-Din, apologized profusely for his past resistance, and begged for help. Nur ad-Din responded with an army for the defense of Damascus. The Crusaders were soundly defeated, and their "army, which had suffered enormous casualties, limped ignominiously back to Jerusalem."<sup>42</sup>

"The failure of his crusade was a great blow to Bernard's prestige in Europe... How could a Holy War fail if, as Bernard had promised, it was the work of God?... The Crusaders themselves blamed the Greeks [presumably for not aiding them enough] and that excuse was very acceptable to Bernard too."

Now Europe, for a while, chastened by defeat, wondered if love and peace may not be a worthwhile alternative to warfare. There was a new movement favoring Virgin Mary. "The emphasis in this movement of the Virgin was on peace and reconciliation, not on holy war," reports Armstrong.<sup>43</sup> A new surge for building churches was emerging. Along with "courtly love," there was growing interest in learning. "During the second half of the twelfth century Christian scholars flocked to Spain and Sicily and there discovered a wealth of learning and scholarship among the Arabs and the Jews in the former's Muslim territories. They began to translate texts from the Arabic and thus discovered the scientific works of Aristotle as well as the philosophical and scientific learning of the Arab world... They found that they had much to learn from Arab scholars like Abu al-Hasan ibn Sina (d. 1037) and their great contemporaries in Muslim Corbova, Abu al-Walid Mohamed ibn Ahmed ibn Rushd. Their names were shortened and Westernized to become Avicenna and Averroes, who became new sages and guides to the struggling West... The Arabs in particular were a light to the Christian West and yet this debt has rarely been fully acknowledged. *As soon as the great translations work had been completed, scholars in Europe began to shrug off this...relationship with Islam and became very vague indeed about who these Arabs really were...* Thomas Aquinas would praise Avicenna and Averroes but *simply dismissed their Islamic religion as pagan error.* During the Renaissance this classical heritage was firmly established in the consciousness of Europe, and Arabic was dropped from the curriculum and denounced by the new Hellenes as a barbarous tongue."<sup>43</sup> So thorough in fact was the denial of Islamic origins to Western civilization, that in Dante's "Divine Comedy" he showers contempt on Islam, insisting that all Muslims were in Hell; but in the same poem, in complete ignorance of who they were, *he celebrates Avicenna and Averroes as Greek and Latin scholars!*

There were some Christians who commenced projects to translate Islamic teachings, but then felt it was more "politically correct" to denigrate Islam in those very works. In 1141 Peter the Venerable of Cluny was in Spain where he met Robert of Kenton, an Englishman, and Herman of Dalmatia who were their studying

mathematics and astronomy. He "persuaded them to cooperate with him on a project of translating major Muslim documents."<sup>44</sup>

The problem with a sincere undertaking in such a climate of deep hate and categorical rejection of Islam in Christendom, was the danger any Christian would face if he allowed himself to be entirely fair, or say anything positive about the Muslim religion. Perhaps they were warned of dire consequences if word got out of their project. The final edited versions were therefore much worse than no such attempts at all. Their work gave the impression of being undertaken in *fairness*, so these skewed versions were taken to be authentic representations. The title of Peter's work, with which he was said to be "*reaching out*" to Muslims was: *Summary of the whole heresy of the diabolical sect of the Saracens*. "It seemed to be impossible for Christians to see Islam as anything but a failed version of Christianity." Armstrong quotes as an example from the annotation of Robert of Kenton's translation of the Quran, in which, disregarding the text, he attacks the Prophet of Islam, calling him a liar who converts at the point of a sword, who subjects "men by power, like animals and brute beasts" "Islam has to be a violent religion because Europe would have it so," reports Armstrong. That same Peter the Venerable, who claimed to want to approach Muslims with "love" when he was in Muslim Spain, later wrote to Louis VII, when he left for the Crusades that "he hoped he would kill as many Muslims as Moses (sic) and Joshua killed Amorites and Canaanites!"<sup>44</sup>

The campaign to overthrow the Muslim rulers from Spain was succeeding. More and more of the Muslim territories were taken with each invasion of Christian forces, and former Christian allies of Muslim rulers, noting the defeats the Muslims were suffering, were nervously ending their alliances with the Muslims. As in the East, there was, with each Christian victory, a massacre not just of the Muslim forces, but also of the Muslim civilians, and of Christians who were their friends.

Some, such as Isaac, the Abbot of Etoile, himself a Crusader in the massacre of Muslims in Lisbon, was horrified with these unending massacres. Armstrong quotes from Benjimen Kedar's *Crusade and Mission* where this Abbot pleads "Stay now your hand, Lord, it is enough." Note that he attributes the massacres of Muslims to God!

### (5)

As part of a policy to invade Muslim lands and expand Christian territories, King Amalric of Jerusalem invaded Egypt in 1162 A.D. This invasion of course does not qualify as a Crusade in Western history books. To the Christian military strategists in Jerusalem, the riches of Egypt and its current weakness were a combination too tempting to resist. The Muslim rulers of the Middle East continued to create their own turmoil, fighting one another for power, and Egypt at this time had become weak and isolated. As we have seen, this turmoil had begun three centuries before; the Abbaside caliph had imported the mercenary warriors of Central Asian origin, later called Mamluke Turks, to guard the far reaches of the Muslim kingdom against invasions. These warriors had, in 861 A.D., seized power themselves, assassinated

the caliph in Baghdad and set up a military dictatorship there; then in 867 a Turk (Ibn Tulum) seized power in Egypt. Various revolutionary Arab groups attempted to overthrow the Turkish domination — in fact, by some accounts; the "Assassins" (so named in the West because they were reported to smoke hashish) began as one such political group. They were Shias, but of the Ismaili "sect" (as distinct from the Shia Jafferys who were to become the majority in Iraq and Persia). A much more powerful Shiite Ismaili force — unconnected to the "Assassins" — had then moved into Egypt from Syria and successfully overthrown the Turkish regime there in 969 A.D., setting itself up as the Fatimid dynasty. The overthrow of the Abbaside regime in Baghdad had not bothered the Fatimids as there was hostility between these "rival" claimants to the caliphate from the start ("Caliphate" by now almost the same as "king"). However, the new Turkish rulers who had spread their domination of the Middle East from one end to the other, clashed with the equally ambitious aims of the Fatimid and therefore there were hostility and constant skirmishes between the Turks and the Egyptian Fatimid caliphate as well. To win the support of their respective populace to these rivalries, each highlighted their religious differences. The Turks were Sunni Muslims, and the Fatimids were Ismaili Shias. Fierce passions were aroused now against each other, which helped the rulers with their objectives. But it also made the two Muslim powers vulnerable which tempted the King of Jerusalem to invade Egypt.

The Christian forces invaded Egypt in 1162, and remained to conquer and slaughter, piece by piece, for nearly six years until Egypt was teetering on collapse. The Fatimid caliph of Egypt desperately sent an urgent message for help to Nur ad-Din. The Christians "had seized Bilbays, massacred all its inhabitants." Terrified citizens of Cairo, knowing what the Christians would do if they captured that city, had set it on fire to ward off the invaders. "'The people of Egypt' wrote William of Tyre 'knew nothing of arms and enjoyed such a delicious standard of living that they could not endure any toil and in everything were soft and cowardly. The immense wealth of Egypt lay undefended and the Turks and Franks alike were warlike and predatory races,'" says Glubb.<sup>45</sup>

Nur ad-Din waited until the Fatimids were suitably weakened, then sent his Kurdish commander Shirkuh at the head of his forces to Egypt. Shirkuh himself had fought the Egyptian Fatimids before, had no love for them, and was apparently hopeful that at the end of this Christian invasion, the Fatimids could be overthrown. He ordered his 31-year-old nephew Yusuf, a frail, sensitive man, reportedly a most reluctant warrior, to join him.

Amalric's Christian forces, now sensing the odds might go against them, beat a hasty retreat. The Egyptian people as their savior hailed Shirkuh, and he used this popularity to declare himself the new vizier to the young caliph. As the latter was much too weak and ailing, in effect Egypt became part of Nur ad-Din's domain. But now Shirkuh died suddenly. Bearing in mind, no doubt, how the Abbasides had lost power from delegating far reaches of their empire to strong warriors, Nur ad-Din now appointed Shirkuh's nephew Yusuf as the new vizier, whom he believed to be weak and therefore easy to control.



But something remarkable happened to Yusuf as soon as he was made vizier with the title *al-Malik al-Nasir* (the Victorious King). He became a strong leader, convinced that this good fortune must mean God had a mission for him in history. He became religious "and started to live a very devout life. As befits a Muslim ruler, he lived frugally in the midst of luxurious trappings of his office: at the end of his life he left only forty-seven drachmas, even though he was [by then] the most powerful man in the Middle East" says Armstrong.<sup>46</sup> Yusuf was to become one of the most famous Muslims in history, under the title Saladin.

After he took over, Saladin faced a revolt from the Egyptian army, making one last desperate attempt to gain Fatimid independence. Now it was the Christians of Jerusalem, hoping that this internal strife would weaken Egyptian defense even more, invaded Egypt again, helped this time by Byzantine Christian forces. But Saladin drove them out. But this invasion had helped distract the Egyptian forces away from a revolt. However, a revolt was still possible, especially when Nur ad-Din now ordered that Egypt must discard its Shia faith and be Sunni Muslim. "Saladin himself was not wholly convinced that such a drastic step was really necessary, for the difference between Sunnis and Shiites is only political and not theological and in no way resembles the differences between Catholics and Protestants in Christianity."<sup>47</sup>

There are in fact differences, albeit minor, but not about the compulsory directives of Islam. But already it was an era of great calamities for generations amongst Muslims, and in such times, frustrated in their attempts to crush the incessant Christian invasions, and the ambitious chieftains seeking greater powers and lands to govern, the populace, convinced that their own sins and waywardness away from Islam must be the reasons for God's wrath, Muslims became fierce in hostility against each others' schools of thought within Islam. God would not be allowing the Christians conquests and the massacre of so many Muslims, unless all Muslims were not following the absolute right path in Islam. So passionate was this growing hostility towards between Sunnis and Shias that it was soon to become common practice, now and in the future for rulers, for personal secular reasons, to encourage the prevailing prejudices among the populace; some were even to make treaties and alliances with Christian invaders against the Muslims of the other school of thought.

To add to the internal strife, there were ill feelings among Arabs and Persians against the various Turkish tribes as they invaded and conquered. At the time, there was understandable bitterness and hate against the Turks at their brutal invasions of the past, and the warlike behavior of some even now after they became Muslims, except for those who became devout Muslims. But far greater horrors were in store for the Muslim world with the incessant Christian invasions and with the absolute brutal massacres that the Mongols would soon inflict upon the Muslim world, obliterating entire cities and their inhabitants in Persia and Mesopotamia. Ironically most of these Mongols would also become Muslims later.

But now, when Nur ad-Din ordered that Egypt's official religion be changed forthwith from Ismaili Shiite to Sunni, Saladin hesitated but Nur ad-Din took the decision out of his hands by sending a Sunni cleric to lead the Friday prayers in Cairo in September 1171 AD, and announced that the caliph of all of the Muslim world was the Sunni caliph in Baghdad.

The caliphate of the weakened Fatimids was officially ended by this act. The Egyptians, traumatized by the Christian invasions and the weakness of their Fatimid caliphate and the strength of Nur ad-Din, acquiesced generally to these changes without major incidents. But now Nur ad-Din faced a revolt from his own Egyptian appointee. Clearly the Christians had made it essential that they be faced in battle and defeated before they prepared for another invasion. On two separate campaigns against the Christians, Saladin is reported to have turned back with his forces as soon as Nur ad-Din joined him with his forces, even though victory for the Muslims seemed assured. Some writers believed he did this in order not to have Nur ad-Din share in the glory of victories, even though it meant that the combined Muslim forces could have easily defeated the Christians.

Yet Saladin was reportedly a genuinely pious man, lived frugally, gave alms generously, and "a shining example of the accessibility that a Muslim ruler should have vis-a-vis the people. Devoted and generous as Nur ad-Din undoubtedly was, he had also been a rather formal, distant man, who tended to inspire a certain awe...Saladin, however, astonished his contemporaries by his informality and friendly identification with the common people and his soldiers. He always ate with his soldiers and retired from them only to pray. He never demanded special treatment."<sup>48</sup>

But Nur ad-Din was convinced Saladin was attempting to upstage him. In 1174 AD he made preparations to lead a large force to Egypt reportedly to confront Saladin. But he died suddenly. Saladin is said to have seen this too as providential, part of God's plan for his great mission as leader of all Muslims. In Syria, however, there were those who felt Nur ad-Din's son al-Salih, should be made the new Sultan, not Saladin, as Nur ad-din had become so disenchanted with Saladin towards the end of his life. However Saladin won through, after al-Salih also suddenly died in 1181 AD at the age of seventeen!

Now the Christians of Jerusalem and other enclaves were nervous. Suddenly the Muslims were coming together into a formidable unity under Saladin. There were divisions too, among these Frankish Christians themselves; there were those who did not wish to provoke Saladin, and sought to be friendly - at least for a time - with the Muslims around them, "until a Crusade arrived from the West. They were used to Muslims and could not regard them as the monsters that haunted the Crusaders' imagination" reports Armstrong.<sup>49</sup> But then there were the hawks, generally new immigrants, "appalled by the friendly relations which sometimes existed between Christians and Muslims" (ibid) and were convinced that peace treaties with Muslims were meant to be broken. Popes also frequently proclaimed that treaties with Muslims could be broken at will.

The new king of Jerusalem, after Amalric's death, was his son Baldwin IV. He was a leper, and not expected to survive for long. The Christian hawks surrounded him, led by Renaud of Chatillon "who arrived in the East shortly after the fall of Edessa in 1147, greedy for gold and Muslim blood." Renaud had even antagonized the Christians of Antioch; "for ten years he had pursued a career of brutal cruelty...In 1156, for example, during a quarrel with Emperor Manuel of Byzantine, he had tortured the Patriarch of Antioch, coated his wounds in honey and exposed his body to the glaring sun so that it was ravaged by insects. The Patriarch capitulated and gave him enough money from Church funds to mount a devastating attack on the Byzantine island of Cyprus, which he pillaged so savagely that it has never recovered from the assault. He massacred thousands of men, women and children and finally gathered all the Greek monks together, cut off their noses and sent them to Constantinople. Reynauld [Renaud]\* would have no compunction about wounding his fellow Christians in this way...Renaud also looted Muslims territory...[made] frequent raids of brutal plunder and vandalism."

Another extreme hawk, Gerard of Ridfort, had arrived from Europe in 1173. Raymund of Tripolis had employed him. The Church and many Christians disapproved of Raymund; he spoke and wrote Arabic and was familiar with Islamic texts, saw Muslims as humans. But because of his high office, he had been appointed regent to Baldwin IV the "Leper King" of Jerusalem. Gerard secretly hated Raymund not just for his friendly attitude towards Muslims, but because he believed Raymund had promised him a certain rich woman for bride, but had then given her to a Pisa merchant who was said to have offered Raymund her weight in gold (reportedly 140 pounds) says Armstrong<sup>20</sup>; Gerard went to Jerusalem, joined the Templars freemasonry, and became its Grand Master in 1179.

The religious zeal professed by the Crusaders who now ruled Jerusalem was somewhat at odds with their personal lifestyle. For instance, Guy of Lusignan, another prominent hawk, had married Princess Sibylla, who jilted Baldwin of Ibelin, had a son by a "previous marriage," now considered a possible heir to the Jerusalem throne. Her mother Agnes (Queen Mother) scandalized even her allies by having her "companion", the handsome, young Heraclius, who had no religious qualifications, appointed Patriarch of Jerusalem! And, as we have seen, Eleanor of Aquitaine reportedly resumed an old affair with her own affair in the Middle East, causing her husband King Louis of France to whisk her away to Europe. Eleanor later divorced Louis and married King Henry II of England and bore Richard I.

Saladin was friendly towards Raymund of Tripolis, so he did not launch any campaign to reclaim the kingdom of Jerusalem as long as Raymund was regent. As soon as the so-called Leper King gained majority and took over the reins of government, however, Saladin advanced upon Jerusalem, but had to restrain himself. "King Baldwin asked Saladin for a truce and Saladin was glad to agree...The Koran says that war is so obnoxious that, provided the conditions are

\* Armstrong spells Renaud of Chatillon's name as "Raynauld"; to avoid confusion, his name, even when quoting from Armstrong, is spelt "Renaud" here, as Runciman and others spell it.

not harmful to Islam, Muslims must cooperate if the enemy proposes a truce or asks for talks, even though the truce should not exceed ten years (8:62-63)... Saladin was always very scrupulous about this and never broke a truce in his life."<sup>21</sup> As we shall see, he was periodically used, and many thousands of Muslims massacred, because the enemies merely used Islam's generous provision to trick Saladin into temporary "truces" so that they could regroup and then attack the Muslims.

Renaud of Chatillon certainly did not believe that it was necessary to honor truces or treaties with Muslims. And he refused to believe that the Muslims would agree to a truce out of religious convictions, but only because they were unprepared, just as he would do himself. He spoke with contempt about the Muslim religion, and promised his associates he would destroy the Muslim sacred shrine in Mecca.

In the summer of 1181 he set out with a large force and attacked one of the caravans taking pilgrims to Mecca. He killed the pilgrims, looted all the valuables, and said he was ready to attack the Medina shrine where Prophet Muhammad was buried. Saladin sent a force under his nephew Faro Shah and Renaud's forces ran away. "He [Renaud] would repeat this sacrilegious attack [on Mecca] on two more occasions... Renaud refused to apologize: [as demanded by Saladin] even the Leper King could not make him return the booty he had seized. When Saladin retaliated by capturing a Christian pilgrim ship and taking 150 pilgrims as hostages, Renaud still refused to return the booty."

"Saladin's prestige increased in the Muslim world, for Renaud had shown the Muslims that Christians were indeed dangerous enemies to Muslims and to Islam. There were more converts to the ideals of the *Jihad*."

# (6)

Renaud and other Christian hawks were keen to get rid of Count Raymund of Tripolis, the "dove." They convinced King Baldwin to deny Raymund, his former guardian, entry to Galilee, when the latter came to take control of new territory he had inherited. In 1181, when the Leper King became very ill, he appointed Guy of Lusignan, an incompetent hawk, regent, not Raymund. "The tragedy of Raymund was the tragedy of all the Frankish colonialists of the second and third generation, who... were ready to become part of the oriental world but were forced by the fanaticism of their newly-come western cousins to take sides; and in the end they could not but take sides with fellow-Christians" writes Steven Runciman in his three-volume *A History of the Crusades*.<sup>22</sup>

That same year, Renaud of Chatillon decided upon an even more provocative attack on the Muslims. He planned now to attack Mecca again as well as Medina; he boasted that "He would drag the Prophet 'the accursed camel driver' from his grave and then press on to Mecca and raze the Ka'aba to the ground" reports Armstrong. He had a fleet of collapsible ships built, sailed with a force into the Red Sea "looting and pillaging the ports of Arabia, until they reached the port of Rabiqh, near Mecca. There was terror in the holy city...Renaud, or Brinz Arnat as he was known, became the enemy of the whole Muslim world."<sup>23</sup>



Saladin's brother Saifad-Din al-Adil rushed, with a force, from Egypt to the rescue, defeated the Christians, took them prisoners to Moab. But Renaud escaped. This time Saladin swore that he would kill Renaud with his own hands.

In September 1183, Saladin arrived with his force outside Galilee. Following his standard principles, in order not to kill civilians, he did not launch an attack on the city, but waited for the Christian forces to come out to battle. Knowing Saladin's principles, and the fact that Saladin's forces were much more powerful than their own, Guy was advised by his associates to remain *inside*. They knew Saladin would not launch an invasion inside the city and risk killing civilians in large numbers. "Saladin tried to lure the Christians into battle but they sat still and eventually Saladin was forced to retire."<sup>54</sup>

In 1180, Christian doves and hawks decided on peace between themselves through marriage. King Baldwin's sister, eleven-year old Isabella was given in marriage to the stepson of hawk extremist Renaud of Chatillon. The wedding was arranged to take place at Renaud's castle at Kerak (inside present-day Jordan). During the celebrations, Saladin and his army arrived at the castle walls, attacking it with rocks, challenging Renaud and the Christians to stop their cowardly hiding, and come out to battle.

While most writers provide the basic events of what followed, Glubb is more forthright than others. The Red Sea adventure, attacking civilians and pilgrims by the Christians had "sealed the fate of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Whereas Saladin might well have acquiesced in the existence on the Mediterranean seaboard of a state controlled by the native [Christian] barons... the newly-arrived Franks like Renaud de Chatillon seemed to be intent on convincing the Muslims that their lives, their property and their religion would never be secure until these mad dogs had been exterminated." In October 1183, the Templars and the Crusaders newly arrived from France, declared they were thirsting to fight Saladin. So he marched upon Kerak. When the Muslims arrived in Kerak, Etienne de Milly, the Lady of Kerak (who had known Saladin when she was married to her first husband Humphrey III of Toron) shrewdly invited Saladin to the wedding of her son. "Saladin is said in return to have enquired in which tower the bridal chamber was situated and to have sent a crier through his army forbidding anyone to shoot against the tower in question."<sup>55</sup>

The Christian armies arrived to meet Saladin's forces and were thoroughly defeated. The dying Baldwin IV apparently was conscience-stricken at how he had been coerced to ill-treat his former guardian Raymond of Tripolis and turn into a hawk himself. He made his grand council promise that his son Baldwin V would succeed him, that Raymond of Tripolis (a dove) would be his regent, that the extreme hawk Guy must not be allowed to usurp power. Knowing that it was the only way for Christian Jerusalem to survive, Raymond eagerly sought a four-year truce with Saladin, which the latter was willing to grant.

But Baldwin V died suddenly at the age of nine. Raymond was persuaded by the Count of Edessa to take the corpse to Galilee for burial. As soon as he was out of the way, "supported by Queen Agnes, the mother of Sibylla, and by Jocelyn

[the Count of Edessa] Guy was crowned King of Jerusalem by the Patriarch Heraclitis. Renaud de Chatillon came with his levies to support him and the Templars, under their Grand Master Gerard de Ridefort, also declared for Guy. It is true that the Patriarch Heraclitis, Gerard de Ridefort and Renaud de Chatillon had sworn to observe the will of Baldwin [IV] excluding Guy, but perjury made no difference to such intrigues... [Then] Early in 1187, he [Renaud de Chatillon] seized a rich [Muslim] caravan traveling from Cairo to Damascus and imprisoned all the personnel in the dungeons of Kerak. As Renaud had himself sworn to observe the truce, his action was perjury as well as treachery. Saladin did not immediately declare war but wrote to Renaud to demand the return of the loot... Renaud replied insolently that he would return nothing. On receiving this answer, Saladin gave way to a fury in which he swore he would kill Renaud with his own hand. Determined finally to exterminate the Franks of the Kingdom of Jerusalem he summoned his troops from Egypt and his feudatories from Aleppo and the Jezira" writes Glubb.

In the battle that followed the Franks were defeated. "The three men responsible for the disaster [causing the war], King Guy, Renaud de Chatillon and Gerard de Ridefort were taken prisoners and led to Saladin's tent. The sultan, with chivalrous courtesy, invited Guy to sit beside himself and offered him a drink of rose-water cooled with ice of Hermon. Guy drank deeply, and then passed the bowl to Renaud, but Saladin exclaimed immediately 'You gave that man the drink, not I'... Saladin denounced the many acts of treachery and brigandage, which Renaud had committed in times of peace. 'Such is the way of kings' replied the robber baron insolently. With a cry of fury, the sultan drew his sword and slashed at Renaud."<sup>56</sup>

"The morning after the battle, the sultan [Saladin] accepted the surrender of Tiberias and chivalrously provided an escort to convey the countess and her suite in safety to Tripoli... On 29th July 1187, he [Saladin] accepted the surrender of Sidon and on 6th August that of Beirut. On 20th September 1187 the sultan laid siege to Jerusalem, which was vigorously defended by Balian of Ibelin, one of the leading barons of Outremer and a *personal friend of Saladin*... He had obtained safe-conduct from Saladin to come to Jerusalem to fetch Queen Maria Comena, whom he had married after the death of King Amaury." Balian used Saladin's generosity to *take up arms alongside the Christian forces of Jerusalem*, while Maria Comena, with Saladin's permission, was allowed to proceed to Tare. When Balian finally saw defeat was imminent, he pleaded with Saladin to let all the Christian troops go free. "The sultan replied that he would have agreed if the city had surrendered without fighting but that now he would only accept unconditional surrender." So now his "friend" Balian threatened that "we shall kill our women and children, burn our homes and property and destroy the Muslim holy places" in addition to killing the thousands of Muslim inhabitants there. So Saladin agreed to Balian's terms of the payment of money and Saladin took Jerusalem on October 2, 1187. "In the end a further thousand prisoners were released without ransom at the request of Aail, Saladin's brother, and five hundred for the sake of

Balian...European historians have contrasted the terms accorded by Saladin with the massacre which marked the capture of Jerusalem by the First Crusade eighty-eight years before."<sup>57</sup>

"July 3 that year was the night of 26/27 Ramadhan, the holiest night of the Muslim year...This *jihad* was no ordinary war of conquest for Saladin's soldiers of Allah; it was a cosmic battle and an act of salvation history." The Muslims were totally victorious at the end of the battle. "My father dismounted and bowed to the ground" al-Afdal [Saladin's son] recalls 'giving thanks to God with tears of joy'. The Christian army had been soundly defeated and the Kingdom of Jerusalem was lost," writes Armstrong.<sup>58</sup> But she confirms all that Grubb reports. "After the battle, Saladin had two important prisoners brought to his tent: King Guy and Renaud of Chatillon...Saladin handed a goblet of water iced with the snows of Mount Hermon to Guy, who drank and passed the goblet to Renaud...when Saladin saw Renaud drinking he pointed out that he had not given him permission to drink. 'I am therefore not obliged to show him mercy' he said with a terrible smile. He then took his sword and cut off Renaud's head...yet to Guy he explained kindly that Renaud had only been executed because of his great crimes and treachery. Guy was taken to Damascus for a time and then allowed to go free. This famous story perfectly illustrates Saladin's attitude, which is a new one in the holy war. He did not want to massacre all the Christians indiscriminately; on the Joshua model...To individual Christians like Guy he [Saladin] could be kind, almost to a fault. To release the king of a people you have just conquered is not a very wise policy and Saladin would pay dearly for this kind of clemency" admits Armstrong.<sup>59</sup>

Yet, as he ordered other soldiers killed, Armstrong questions whether this was in accordance with Islamic law; because the Qur'an (47:5) says that once the fighting is over, prisoners should either be ransomed or released as a favor. Armstrong quotes the *hadith* "You must feed the [prisoners] as you feed yourselves, and clothe them as you clothe yourselves, and if you should set them a hard task, you must help them in it yourselves," and the Qur'anic verse "It shall be best for you to endure your wrongs in patience" (16:127).

This is a strange argument to make. The Qur'an does not ask Muslims to be taken advantage of, to show foolish, excessive clemency, and, as Armstrong has herself stated earlier, Saladin's excessive clemency was used by the Crusaders, every chance they got, leading to huge losses of life and land for the Muslims.

In fact, Saladin was soon to see proof of the terrible consequences of his extreme leniency; yet he apparently learnt nothing from it. "Knights who escaped from the battle and civilians who fled from the occupying Muslim army began to congregate in Tyre, where they established themselves under the leadership of one Conrad of Montferrat," admits Armstrong.<sup>60</sup> But for now, the Muslims were ecstatic and Saladin continued with his extraordinary generosity towards the Crusaders. "On October 2, 1187 Saladin and his army entered Jerusalem as conquerors and for the next eight hundred years Jerusalem would remain a Muslim city...Saladin's victory occurred that year on the day when Muslims commemorated [Prophet]

Mohammed's Night Journey [Miraj]... he did not take revenge for the 1099 massacre and now that hostilities had ceased he ended the killing. *Not a single Christian was killed and there was no plunder.* The ransoms were deliberately set very low, but still there were thousands of poor people who could not even afford them...Saladin was moved to tears by the plight of [Christian] families who were rent asunder and he released many of them freely...his brother al-Adil was so distressed by the plight of the prisoners that he asked Saladin for a thousand of them for his own use and then released them on the spot. All the Muslims were scandalized to see the rich Christians escaping with their wealth, *which could have been used to ransom all the [Muslim] prisoners.* When the Imam ad-Din saw the Patriarch Heraclius leaving the city with chariots crammed with treasure, he urged Saladin to confiscate it. But Saladin refused...Christians everywhere will remember the kindness we have done them' he said. Heraclius paid his ten-dinar ransom like everybody else and was even provided with a special escort to keep his treasure safe during the journey to Tyre" reports Armstrong.<sup>61</sup>

Martin Scott in *Medieval Islam* says "A sincere Muslim, he [Saladin] yet respected the religious convictions of those who differed from him; many Christians not of the Roman faith preferred his rule to the intolerance of the Latins... in his hour of victory he was to show himself just and merciful; his recapture of Jerusalem was to be marked with none of the disgraceful carnage which had been seen in 1099" (i.e., when the Crusaders had conquered that city). Predictably, Saladin was venerated in the West now. "Legends grew up that he had received Christian baptism...[become] a Christian knight," says Armstrong.<sup>62</sup> It is also likely that many knowing Christians were amused at the utter naivete of the Muslim leader who could be so easily fooled with flattery.

Generosity and a high code of honor had clearly been practiced by other Muslim leaders of the time, even during the Crusades. Nur ad-Din had shown similar generosity, even to the extent of not attacking the Crusaders when they were mourning the death of their leader. "Baldwin III, King of Jerusalem, died in Beirut on February 10 1162, at the age of thirty-three... when it was suggested to Noor al-Deen that he seize the opportunity to invade the Frankish states, he nobly replied that it would be disgraceful to do so, as the Christians were to be pitied at the loss of so gallant a prince" says Glubb (p.52).<sup>63</sup>

Muslim chroniclers of the time were now really irritated with Saladin's excessive and incessant generosity to the enemy. The agony of the Muslim populace can only be gauged from one bitter comment of one Arab chronicler Ibn al-Athir whom Armstrong quotes (page 259) who wrote "Every time he [Saladin] seized a Frankish city or stronghold such as Acre, Ascalon, or Jerusalem, Salah ad-Din allowed the enemy soldiers and knights to seek refuge in Tyre, a city that had thus become impregnable...Ought we not to say that in a sense it was Salah ad-Din himself who organized the defense of Tyre against his own army?"

Inside Jerusalem, the Muslims now purified "the holy places from their long pollution," which included cleaning out and removing the *latrines*, which the Templars had set up inside al-Aqsa mosque. "Workers purified the mosques,



sprinkled them with rose water and on Friday, October 9, [1187] the Muslims celebrated their Friday prayer in al-Aqsa" writes Armstrong.<sup>42</sup>

Saladin did take what was for him a radical step away from the *sunnah* (Islamic traditions). "Hitherto Christians, as one of the People of the Book, had always been allowed to worship freely in Muslim cities. Now Saladin excluded the Franks. Again this was not a war against Christianity *per se*. The Greek and Eastern Christians, who had not persecuted and oppressed the Muslims, were permitted to remain in the Holy City and in the Holy Sepulcher but the churches built by the Christian Crusaders [the "Franks"] were turned into mosques and madrasas [schools]. ... When the First Crusaders conquered the Holy Land, no Jews or Muslims had been allowed inside Jerusalem [in fact all those living there had been killed]... the Franks were no longer People of the Book [to Saladin now]... But this new exclusiveness did not apply to the Jews, the other People of the Book. *Saladin invited them back to their Holy City, to live there side by side with the Muslims...* huge bands of Jews emigrated from the diaspora to Palestine" writes Armstrong. It was the ultimate irony. It was obsessive adherence by Saladin to Islamic directives not just of the Qur'an but upon every available *Sunnah* from the time of the prophet (as interpreted by his theologians) that allowed Europe's Christians to keep their foothold in Asia, and for Jews to come to Palestine and Jerusalem and settle there, after they had been expelled by prior rulers, including the recent Franks. Christian Crusaders would continue to invade from Europe, convinced that if they invaded and lost, they would never be dealt by Muslims as severely as they themselves dealt with Muslims.

It was this Islamic belief in excessive leniency towards the "People of the Book" which the Christian would use to dupe Muslims repeatedly. *This Muslim "weakness" would become the cornerstone of Western foreign policy over the centuries.*

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Armstrong does recognize that Saladin's excessive generosity was in *contravention* to the provisions in the Quran, because the life and security of the Muslim state was endangered thereby. "The Quran said that oaths and treaties must be kept to the letter and it was essential that the Muslims should observe the legalities. 'Christians everywhere will remember the kindness we have done them' he [Saladin] said... In fact Saladin's clemency *contravened* the ruling of the Quran because, instead of ensuring that the conflict with the Christians was ended once and for all, he had unwittingly prolonged it. There would be more Crusades to the Holy Land for the recovery of Jerusalem, more bloodshed and massacre, and it would be another hundred years before the Muslims finally evicted the Western Christians from the East".

The Muslim world had been highly traumatized with these invasions and massacres. And they were, no doubt, struggling with the interpretations of the recently-published authenticated volumes of *Sunnah* (sayings of the Prophet). As

a result, perhaps, Saladin and his theologians felt that the safe route was not to interpret but to literally follow the traditions, and to be more lenient than Islam required in order that the extremely negative image ingrained of Islam in the minds of Europe would change.

The fact is that, while the Quran directs extremely lenient treatment for prisoners, and that warfare must be ended if the enemy sues for peace or for a treaty, it also makes it very clear that punishment of enemies should be "proportionate to the wrong that has been done to you." Other passages reaffirm this directive. Therefore, if the enemy, (as the Crusaders did repeatedly), sues for peace when he is losing, then regroup to begin another assault, or when the enemy is apt, repeatedly, to be inhumane in his massacre of Muslim civilians, then *the punishment must meet the crime*; all actions must be taken to ensure that such future attacks and massacres of innocent masses *do not take place*. It is true that Muslims had been directed from Prophet Muhammad's own code to be strictly ethical and generous to a defeated enemy in warfare. But during Prophet Muhammad's time, there had not been an *enemy who had repeatedly resumed assaults upon the Muslims, as soon as they could regroup, again and again. His traditions therefore applied to an entirely different time and circumstance.*

What assurance had the Crusaders given to Saladin to convince him that they *truly* repented their past massacres of civilians and that they would not revert to more invasions? None at all. It may be true that on some rare occasions, such as after this last battle against Islam's perennial enemy Renaud, Saladin had ordered the execution of the remaining forces of Christians who had battled against the Muslims. But he was always seeking ways to forgive. And he gave great honor to the Crusaders, the rulers and the knights, and took pains to ensure their safety.

Some hawks like Renaud had contemptuously tossed aside every treaty made by their King, and challenged the Muslims to call on their Muhammad to come to their aid. Saladin's oath to kill Renaud with his own hands had not come until Renaud had repeatedly broken treaties, massacred and looted many Muslim communities. Even as King Guy and his entourage left Jerusalem with all their wealth and with Muslim escorts to see that they and their treasures reached Tyre safely, Muslims were worried. No doubt Saladin's honor code was highly commendable, and reflected the honorable ethical codes of Muslims of the area, which had been established by Prophet Muhammad himself and practiced from his times. No doubt this was the code of *noblesse oblige*, which some Muslim rulers were known to apply, i.e., the obligation of the nobility to respect not just other nobles, but to practice benevolence towards those of lesser rank. But was this the right approach to safeguard the Muslim world from fresh onslaughts?

Exactly what was the frame of mind of Saladin and his closest advisors? No doubt there was that deep concern to follow the directives of Islam meticulously; there was also the apparent belief that generosity, even if it was to the point of foolishness, was good for the image of Muslims, that "Christians everywhere will remember the kindness we have done them" as Saladin claimed. But was there also in Saladin and later in Al-Kamil a *personal* hunger to be liked by the Europeans?

It is most likely that at least Christian hawks saw this attitude as stupidity of the Muslim leader. Why else would someone who won battles against sworn enemies risk the repetition of attacks by being so generous in victory, so easy to dupe?

Whether easy to dupe or not, whether seeking Christian goodwill or betterment of the image of Islam among Christians, there is no doubt at all that, above all else, there was the perennial huge handicap which Muslims faced vis-à-vis the Christians and the Jews, from the start, and would face *always*. "Say 'We believe in that which is revealed to us and that which is revealed to you. Our God and your God is one'" says the Quran (29:46). Muslims are ordered to respect the People of the Book, "except those who do evil." In fact, the *Quran* (2:62, 5:69) even says that *sincere Christians and Jews will go to Heaven*. But while Muslims were taught they must be friendly, the Christians and the Jews were taught that Islam was a fake religion, and the Christian Church believed that *destroying Islam and Muslims was a sacred duty of Christians*.

There would be times some Christians and almost all Jews would be friends with Muslims for periods of time; some Christians, genuinely devoted to Jesus and his message, could be marvelously ethical and fair in all matters; Jews in particular found, from experience, that they were always safer with Muslims, helped by Muslims and therefore remained friends with them against Christians through the centuries until recently, our own times, when Muslims had lost all their power.

But the heavy odds against Muslims in their relations with the "People of the Book" are inherent in the obligations imposed by Islam and will always remain, at least until Jesus' teachings are *better understood* by the Christian world. Had Arian Christianity prevailed among the majority of Christians, as it had in the early years, that possibility of a rapport, a less violent hate towards Islam, would have ensued. *But how could any devout Christian, taught to believe implicitly and explicitly in the divinity of Jesus Christ as the very core of his faith, ever be expected to believe that a prophet had been sent by God with a message after Jesus which at least implied that it superseded the message of Christ, even if that new religion claimed to believe in the message of Christ and his Immaculate Conception? No devout Christian would even stop to consider the facts at that religion. It had to be false.*

The difference was never more glaringly illustrated than at the very start, when Caliph Omar, the second Caliph, during his conquest of Mesopotamia and Persia had come to Jerusalem in 638 AD and taken it unopposed. He had firmly believed he was taking the city in the name of God, recognizing its sanctity to the Christians and the Jews, but also the city towards which Muslims had initially been asked to pray daily, from where Prophet Muhammad was believed to have had his Night Journey to Heaven and met Jesus and Moses. Caliph Omar had asked to be taken to the Temple Mount and knelt in prayer there. Then he went to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where it became time for the Muslim prayer, "Courteously the Patriarch invited him to pray where he was but Omar as courteously refused. If he knelt to pray in the church, he explained, the Muslims would want to commemorate the event by building a mosque there, and that would

mean that they would demolish the Holy Sepulchre. *This must not happen, because the Christian shrines must be preserved.* Instead Omar went to pray at a little distance from the church, and sure enough, directly opposite the Holy Sepulchre there is still a small mosque dedicated to the Caliph Omar. The other Great Mosque of Omar was built on the [ruins of the] Temple Mount to mark the Muslim conquest, together with the mosque al-Aqsa, which commemorates Mohammed's Night Journey. *For years, the Christians had used the site of the ruined Jewish Temple as the city rubbish dump. The Caliph helped his Muslims to clear the garbage with his own hands and there Muslims raised the two shrines to establish Islam in the third most holy city in the Islamic world*" writes Armstrong<sup>65</sup>. Caliph Omar naively believed that Christians and Jews would be pleased that their common God was once more being worshipped in Jerusalem!

This simple trust had been shattered now, time and again, by Saladin's time. Yet leaders like Saladin were still willing to do *almost anything* to win the friendship of Christians. Concurrently, faced with unending horrors of constant invasions and massacres, the Muslim felt the desperate need to cling to *everything*, including *ethnic practices*, as Islam, unquestioningly, and follow as much as was practicable of all that had prevailed in the golden years during the prophet's lifetime.

After prophet Muhammad died, incalculable stories had sprung up, about what he said and did. They continued to mushroom over the years, many contradictory to one another. There was a desperate need seen to officially research and prepare a compendium looking through *all the sources*, their references, sworn statements taken from the sources all the way back to the prophet's time. Scholars of high qualifications were appointed by the Sunni world to do the task, while a similar undertaking was also entrusted to highly qualified Shia theologians by the Shias. Various schools of thought among Muslims adhered to one or the other of these compilations. *Suffering great, unending pain, which each Muslim generation was now to suffer from barbaric invasions, the need to cling to this Life Raft for survival became the norm.* Europe's Christians took the Muslim world completely by surprise by descending upon them, killing thousands, conquering Muslim lands including Jerusalem. Alongside these repeated invasions later called the Crusades, came the Mongol barbarians. Irreplaceable books and research of centuries in Baghdad and all across Persia were destroyed when the Mongols deliberately set libraries on fire, and destroyed entire towns which were centers of learning, killing millions. Thousands of volumes of original thought, of magnificent learning and treatises of brilliant, pioneering minds, exploring fresh religious and secular horizons, were mountains of ashes at the hands of the wild Mongols. The Muslims who survived watched all this in horror. Why had God allowed this to happen? Why was the most perfect God punishing Muslims so fiercely? Perhaps those who criticized the Muslim scholars for their pioneering research into Greek and other ancient sources of learning had been right. Perhaps it was wrong to dig so deep into "pagan" civilizations, as the Western Christian Churches always said and some of the Muslim theologians also claimed now. Perhaps Muslims should revert to simply following the basics of Islam, revert strictly to what Muslims of the era of the Prophet had practiced. In addition to



the Quran, the new volumes of hadiths (traditions) now emerging from the scholars should be the *only* guide, not any exploration of older cultures and learning.

The gradual decline in the scope of learning in the Muslim world now commenced. And often, as in the case of Saladin, pious Muslims zealously seeking to apply Islamic guidelines, applied them literally for fear of misinterpreting them and being punished even more fiercely by God.

## (8)

"In 1189, Guy of Lusignan [the defeated King of Jerusalem, whom Saladin had released with all his treasures and provided with an escort as protection to Tyre] ...sailed from Tyre to Acre and...managed to besiege the Muslim garrison in the city against all odds."<sup>64</sup> King William of Sicily had already sailed for Tyre for yet another crusade, "more Crusaders sailed from Denmark and Frisia to help the siege of Acre and preachers sailed from Palestine to recruit more help from Europe." Armstrong provides an example of the kind of propaganda, which was being used to incite Europe and get more Crusaders. "To incite the people to vengeance, they [Christian preachers] carried with them a painting of the Messiah, peace be upon him, bloodied by an Arab who was striking him. They would say 'Look, here is the Messiah and here is Mohammed, the Prophet of the Muslims, beating him to death.'"

Pope Gregory VIII had called for a crusade with the loss of Jerusalem. However there was not much enthusiasm for a Crusade even among the kings and knights, who were busy battling each other. King Philip Augustus of France and King Henry II were constantly at war against each other, invading each other's lands. Henry's son Richard (later King Richard "the Lionheart") first fought with his father in these wars. Then he switched sides and fought with Philip against his father. On July 6, 1189, Henry died and Richard now became king. Almost immediately, Richard "was eager to go crusading. *This was not out of religious fervor: Richard was a soldier and the Crusade was an exciting and glamorous military challenge. Philip Augustus was far less enthusiastic*" but felt it was politically expedient, now that Richard was going, that he should as well. "He and Richard made a formal peace treaty and agreed to leave for Acre later that year."<sup>65</sup>

In 1189, Richard was crowned King. "He was more French than English in spirit and very much the son of his mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine", writes Armstrong, as do others. This Eleanor, it should be remembered, had been the wife of King Louis VII of France (Saint Louis). He had taken her away from the scandal with her uncle in Antioch; later she had left Louis and married King Henry II of England.

Now that their king was to go on a Crusade, the English masses evidently felt very passionately about religion. They expressed this by attacking Jews in England immediately. "A deputation of Jews who were attending the coronation [of Richard] was attacked by the crowd...the mob then went on to attack the Jewish community in London. As one of the chroniclers put it: 'Many of those who were hastening to go to Jerusalem were determined first to rise against the Jews'".<sup>66</sup> There was now a recurrence of the belief, from an incident years before, that Jews

used human blood for their secret Passover bread. "Pogroms erupted all over the country. The most serious of these took place at York, where the Jewish community was massacred, and at Norwich, which had a tradition of anti-Semitism" (ibid).

In the meanwhile, amidst great fanfare, the current Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa picked up the Cross on March 27, 1188 and announced he was setting out on a Crusade. But "a whole year was to elapse before he fulfilled his vow. Finally he set out in early May 1189." It was a huge army, "contemporaries estimated that there were 50,000 cavalry and 100,000 foot soldiers." Frederick had organized a powerful image campaign; he "had got Charlemagne canonized in Germany and had commissioned a monk at Aachen to write a new version of *The Legends of Charlemagne*, which made much of Charlemagne's "legendary pilgrimage to Jerusalem" and his so-called 'holy wars' against the Muslims in Spain."<sup>67</sup> As we have seen, neither of these claims was true in fact, but based upon a fantasy poem. There was talk now (which Frederick did nothing to dispel) that he was the Last Emperor of the ancient legends who would conquer the East, lead to the Second Coming of Christ and the Last Days.

A huge Crusading force marched across Europe and arrived at the river Calycadnus On June 10, 1190. It became extremely turbulent while they were crossing it, Frederick Barbarossa drowned along with many others and the rest of the huge Crusading force "deserted and only a tiny remnant limped into Antioch...but there was still hope for the Third Crusade and people eagerly watched the progress of Richard's and Philip's armies, which had set out from Vezelay in July 1190" reports Armstrong. But the Richard-Philip forces were busy fighting each other and it was not until the Spring of 1191 that the two armies sailed for Acre. And then it was only Philip's army that went directly to Acre. Henry decided to digress on another conquering adventure first. He invaded and conquered Cyprus and captured a Muslim commercial vessel, killed all the Muslims in it. Only then did Richard decide to proceed to Acre. By the time Richard arrived there, Acre's Muslims had been under siege by the Christians for two years. The Christians had been camped outside the walls of Acre, "and encircling them [the Christian forces] was Saladin's army, unable to reach the Muslims inside the city" writes Armstrong.<sup>68</sup> The Muslims saw hope as Richard and Philip feuded again, but then the Christians were finally able to break through the walls and trapped the Muslim garrison and the Muslim civilians within. The victorious Crusaders demanded and received the surrender of Acre, 150,000 Christian prisoners and what the Christians believed was the True Cross.

Philip returned home after this, but Richard remained and try again to recapture Jerusalem. But he felt "financially burdened by the large number of [Muslim] prisoners of war and he had 2700 Muslims, including women and children, brought outside the city walls and killed in cold blood and in full view of Saladin's army. By August 20. Muslim morale was at a very low ebb, but when Saladin's army saw the Franks were as ready as ever to commit atrocities they dedicated themselves to the *jihad* with new determination, realizing that there could be no peace for them until they had expelled the Christians from Palestine".<sup>69</sup>

In the battles that followed, the Crusaders had the usual advantage in the metal armor they wore, head to foot. But there was now also the flip side to this advantage. The mail armor at the height of the Middle East heat caused many to fall ill, yet Richard did win some battles, and lose others. Muslims were convinced Saladin was not the same man he had been; reports suggested that he was feeling very guilty about his prior charitable gestures which had allowed the Christians to regroup at Acre, massacre the Muslims there, and commence yet another Crusade. *Each time Richard suffered reverses, he promptly asked for a truce. Saladin's reputation had clearly preceded him; Richard banked on the fact that Saladin was known never to refuse a truce offer by the enemy; such a temporary truce allowed Richard to rest his forces and begin again.*

After Richard had conquered Gaffe and asked for yet another truce, however, "al-Adil [Saladin's brother], who was in charge of negotiations, shrewdly understood the Christian position and urged Saladin not to give in too easily." Richard felt he should make a special effort to woo al-Adil. "Richard soon became very fond of him [al-Adil] calling him 'my brother and my friend'. For his part, al-Adil was perfectly prepared to make friends with Christians, provided, of course, they did not pose a serious political threat."

Richard knew that his reputation in Europe depended upon the recapture of Jerusalem. He passionately appealed to Saladin to give up Jerusalem. Saladin refused to make the gift. So Richard came up with another proposition. "He suggested that his sister Joanna should marry al-Adil and that the couple should rule the Holy Land, as Muslim King and Christian Queen.... it is a very clear demonstration of the fact that Richard saw the Muslims as normal human beings, with whom one could make perfectly reasonable arrangements by means of diplomacy and marriage alliances."<sup>70</sup> This offer was reportedly rejected by al-Adil.

At the end of the year the negotiations were in a stalemate and fighting commenced again. "Saladin was always able to take back one city whenever Richard had won another. It was a military stalemate...by August he [Richard] was desperate for a settlement. There was absolute military deadlock on both sides...he had bad news from home, where Philip Augustus - his fellow Crusader — had invaded his [Richard's] lands in France. Finally Richard himself fell ill. Saladin graciously sent him his own doctor and sent gifts of fruits and snow to make cooling drinks, but he remained adamant and would make no further concessions." Saladin had already agreed that European Christians could come as pilgrims to Jerusalem and he promised they would be protected. Richard had to be satisfied with this promise and status quo in land control. He signed a treaty of peace for five years.

Richard was to become a legend in future history books. The reality did not match the books. "After his coronation he [had] spent only a few months in the country [England], which he bled dry to pay for his campaigns in France and in the Holy land. Yet during his absence on the Crusade he became known as the Lion heart or Lionhearted and is reputed to have been a great king of England simply because he led an army to the Holy Land."<sup>71</sup>

*In fact, Richard was very sickly from childhood and yet obsessed with wars.* Many English historians reveal that when he returned to Europe, he was still yearning for more battles; in a war with Henry IV of Germany, he was caught, held for a huge ransom, which the English had to pay before he was released. Soon after he was released, Richard was out on the battlefields, again, this time once more against Philip II of France (with whom he had led the Third Crusade) and died on the battlefield. Of course the legend of "Robin Hood" which evolved into one of the most popular stories in English literature (and subsequently in movies and TV) created its own aura of glamour around Richard along with a wholly mythical Robin Hood. In later years, seeking to emulate the glorified and highly distorted accounts about Charlemagne in the *chansons de geste* in Aachen, the priest's *Legends of Charlemagne*, a similar fable was written in French and then translated into Old English, in which Richard "is the son of an enchantress named Cassodorien, who becomes the wife of Henry II and afterwards disappears in a magical manner. Richard...is named 'Lion-heart' because he robbed the lion of his heart" (Arthur Compton-Rickett *A History of English Literature*, Thomas Nelson, London 1955)<sup>72</sup>. This soon became a tradition and Shakespeare uses it in his *King John*. In reality, of course Henry II, Richard's father, married the very wealthy Eleanor of Aquitaine, who soon fought with Henry and left him to return to France. England was to spend more than a hundred years in wars against France to try and take Eleanor's Normandy lands.

## (9)

Europe's Christendom was deeply depressed at the loss of Jerusalem in the Second Crusade and the failure of the Richard III and Philip II in the Third Crusade to recover it. Bernard had again promised this conquest and it had not come true. The European public was convinced God must be angry with his new Chosen People (Christians), just as He had become angry with the Jews, his old Chosen People. The Christians still held a strip of land from Beirut to Gaffe, but this was not enough. "In Europe, Crusaders began to consider a new campaign." writes Armstrong.<sup>73</sup> *Richard had signed a five-year treaty with Saladin, but of course the Church always ruled that any treaty with Muslims could be broken.*

However, the Christians in the Holy Land were not too keen to risk a Crusade. "They were now very anxious to appease the Muslims, because they knew full well that they could never sustain a new Muslim attack."<sup>74</sup> It is significant that knowing they could easily crush the Christians and take over the strip of coastline the Christians still held, the Muslims (who, Christendom propaganda had always claimed, spread Islam "at the point of a sword") *did not even care to wipe off the small Christian enclaves remaining in the Middle East*. Responsible Western writers concede the reality. "In Christendom at the end of the twelfth century Crusaders were sharpening their swords, but in the Middle East there was a new detente: Muslims and Christians settled down to live alongside one another in peace."<sup>74</sup> Late arrivals in the shape of pilgrims and Crusaders from the West were often



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shocked to find how far their predecessors had gone in fraternizing with the Infidel. Many of the settlers [who had stayed on from previous Crusades] had adopted Eastern modes of dress, such as the turban; intermarriages with the Muslims were not uncommon; and there were even some shocking cases of conversion." writes Martin Scott<sup>75</sup>

However, very seldom, if ever, do Western historians stop to consider how much the *psyche* of the Muslim masses, had been tortured from 1096 onwards, after being subjected not only to the unending invasions from the Christian world but from the *strife within*, as a result of ambitious warriors within the Muslim world seeking to increase their domain, as well as withstand the invasions from new hordes of invading tribes. "In the eleventh century the Seljuk Turks, new converts to Islam in Central Asia, had invaded the Arab Middle East and Byzantine Anatolia. They had ousted the old Arab [and Persian] leaders in that part of the Islamic empire and in effect taken control: the main opponents of the Crusaders were Turks, not Arabs. Next, Arab bedouin tribes from Upper Egypt invaded what is now Libya and Tunisia, causing immense devastation, and during the twelfth century fanatical fundamentalists [sic] Berber Muslims had seized power for a period in Morocco and al-Andalus in Spain. Hitherto [Muslim] North Africa had been prosperous and a major center of civilization but it never recovered from these disasters."<sup>76</sup> Noting all this unrest, the Pope had ordered yet another Crusade upon the Muslim masses.

But this time there was considerable resistance from some of the European monarchs themselves, including Philip Augustus II of France. Pope Innocent III was enforcing his control increasingly upon the temporal rulers, along with greater demands for money as "tribute." "Ah! happy Saladin!" King Philip Augustus is reported by Prof. John Draper to have said at one point "he has no Pope above him. I too will become Mohammedan." He was not alone. King John of England, after a confrontation with the Pope "sent a message to the Emir Al Mouenim [Muslim Commander of the Faithful], offering to become a Mohammedan. The religious sentiment was then no higher in him than it was, under a like provocation, in the King of France," writes Prof. Draper (p. 14, vol. II).<sup>77</sup> It was no doubt this shocking comment by King John, who in reality had been quite an able and just king, that at least contributed to the blackening of his name in the legends of Robin Hood.

Prof. Draper makes a remarkable connection between the ensuing Magna Charta in England and the suffocating control of the papacy over the secular ruler. He says that the Magna Charta, long glorified in the West as the first democratic document, was in reality the result of the king and nobles seeking to establish freedom for themselves from a tussle between the Papacy. As we shall see, others (e.g., British historian Belloc) has also reported that the Magna Charta was no more than a revolt of the aristocracy against the monarch, not at all a move for "democracy."<sup>78</sup> Prof. Draper reports that when the Magna Charta was formulated, the Pope denounced it: "It is not the policy of the Roman Court to permit so much as the beginnings of such freedoms" (Draper, p. 54, 55).<sup>78</sup>

When Pope Innocent III now proclaimed a Fourth Crusade, "even the clergy could not conceal their suspicion that the proclamation of a crusade was merely the preparation of a swindle". Roger Bacon later estimated that during each Crusade, the tribute demanded by Rome "was thrice the income of the king himself" (*ibid*).

Saladin had died in 1193 and his brother al-Adil had succeeded him. Pope Innocent III was convinced this was the right time to strike. With the problems he now had with European monarchs, Innocent turned in 1199 to knights and barons to commence what European historians were to call the Fourth Crusade. In 1201 Boniface of Montferrat became the leader of the project to arouse support and recruits around Europe. By August, the leaders had decided on their strategy to invade Muslim lands. They would attack Cairo and capture Egypt. *Why Egypt, when the Crusades were intended to be a religious movement to claim the Holy Land?* No amount of convoluted explanations by subsequent historians can disguise the fact that the intent of the Crusades was becoming more openly the conquest of lands and riches.

But while the forces for this invasion of Egypt were being crystallized, the Crusaders were now drawn first to another tempting adventure: *the conquest of the Christian Byzantine empire*. Turmoil within the Byzantine court in 1201 provided the opportunity. Byzantine King Isaac had been overthrown in a coup by his brother who became Alexius III; Isaac was blinded and jailed along with his son (also called Alexius). Alexius, the son, escaped, went to Germany to seek help from Philip of Swabia. Philip now suggested to Boniface that "Byzantium could be a valuable detour on his way to Egypt."<sup>79</sup> Food and transport were needed for the enterprise however, and in 1202 the Crusaders made a business arrangement with major Venetian merchants (led by one Enrico Dandolo) to provide these at a reasonable price. The Venetians were very reluctant to be involved in anything against the Muslims with whom they had very valuable trade — most of Eastern luxuries and innovations that came to Europe, came via Venice. But these merchants were annoyed with Byzantium rulers because the latter offered very poor trading terms, and the idea of the overthrow of the Byzantine ruler was very appealing to these Venetian businessmen. The Crusaders were overjoyed; this replacement of King Alexius III by his nephew Alexius was very pleasing as the nephew promised the Crusaders free reign under his rule. The Pope was happy as Alexius Jr. agreed to bring the Orthodox Eastern Church under Catholic control.

However, the Crusaders were unable to gather all the money they needed, so they invaded the nearby Christian city of Zara, Hungary, to loot it. On November 11 1202, the Crusaders invaded Zara, the city surrendered on November 15. The Crusaders spent the rest of the year and the winter in Zara, taking whatever they wished in looting and pillaging. In April 1203, now wealthy and filled with Zara's provisions, the Crusaders sailed towards Constantinople "occupying some important ports on the way"<sup>78</sup> killing, looting, pillaging, as always, wherever they stopped.

The Byzantines watched their approach with great nervousness. The recent upheavals had left their defenses weak and disorganized. Frantically, they "closed



their gates and brought the blind former Emperor Isaac out of prison and installed him on the throne" writes Armstrong. They hoped that his son Alexius, who accompanied the Crusaders, would now ask the Crusaders not to attack his own father's regime. They were wrong. But while they installed Alexius Jr. co-Emperor, he could not provide all the wealth the Crusaders wanted, so the Crusaders commenced killing, raping, looting; "drunken Crusaders often pillaged the villages of the suburbs [of Constantinople] and there was a dangerous fire in the city when the Crusaders *piously* set fire to a mosque which had been built for visiting Muslim traders" reports Armstrong, (italics added). Western historians' report that the patience of the Byzantine forces gave out; holding the co-emperors responsible for the presence of these Crusaders and their excesses. The palace guards revolted. Whether it was the guards or the Crusaders angry that Alexius (the nephew) had not provided all the wealth they demanded, but Emperor Alexius was found strangled; his father Isaac died a few days later. The furious Byzantines insisted Alexius III's son-in-law be made Emperor Alexius Musophilus. But the Crusaders demanded that a Frank must now be on the Byzantine throne, and that the Orthodox Church, as Innocent III wished, should be placed under the *Papal* rule. "The Fourth Crusade became a holy war against the Greek Orthodox Christians...The Crusaders attacked the city on April 6...The sack of Constantinople was one of the great crimes of history. For three days, the Venetians and Crusaders rushed through the streets, raping, killing and pillaging with a horrible eagerness. Women and children lay dying in the streets and nuns were raped in the convents...*In the great basilica of St. Sophia drunken soldiers tore down the silk hangings and icons underfoot, and a prostitute sat on the Patriarch throne singing bawdy songs. Palaces and hovels were vandalized.* The chronicler Geoffrey de Villehardouin wrote that never since the creation of the world had so much booty been taken from a city; no one could possibly count the piles of gold, silver and jewels or the bales of precious materials...After the carnage the Crusaders and Venetians appointed Count Baldwin IX of Flanders and Hainault to be the Latin Emperor of Byzantium."<sup>79</sup>

Some Christian chroniclers of the time found no way to avoid reporting a few of the excesses. "Those Christians [Crusaders] behaved abominably, sacking and burning the palaces of the city [Constantinople], stealing lead from the roofs of churches and selling it to the Greeks" wrote a Frank contemporary, the chronicler who had also anonymously written "Gesta Francorum" after the First Crusade.

A few historians more fiercely condemn the rape of Constantinople by the Crusaders. The courageous Prof. Draper, even though he was writing in the strict, early Victorian era, does not hesitate to point out that even the *Crusading clergy participated in the massacre and looting in this pillage and loot*. Draper reports that the Crusaders then went "for an attack upon Constantinople, and took that city by storm AD 1204, thereby establishing Latin Christianity in the Eastern metropolis, but alas! With bloodshed, rape and fire. On the night of the assault more houses were burned than could be found in any three largest cities in France." In fact so much rape and murder was committed that even the Pope was to condemn it. "In St. Sophia, the silver was stripped from the pulpit; an exquisite and highly prized

table of oblation was broken in pieces; the sacred chalices were turned into drinking cups; the gold fringe was ripped off the veil of the statuary. Asses and horses were led into the churches to carry off the spoil. A prostitute mounted the patriarch throne, and sang, with indecent gestures, a ribald song. The tombs of the emperors were rifled... the corpse of Justinian ... exposed to the violence of a mob... each ecclesiastic seized and secreted whatever he could...Thus the Abbot Martin obtained for his monastery in Alsace the following inestimable items: 1. A spot of blood of our Savior; 2. A piece of the true cross; 3. The arm of the Apostle James; 4. Part of the skeleton of John the Baptist; 5. I hesitate to write such blasphemy — 'A bottle of the milk of the Mother of God'. In contrast with the treasures thus acquired may be set the relics of a very different kind, the remains of ancient art which they destroyed... the works of many ancient authors were [also] destroyed...[But] the Bishop of Rome [Pope] at last appointed the Bishop of Constantinople. The acknowledgement of papal supremacy was complete...Rome and Venice divided between them the ill-gotten gains of their undertaking... the poor remnant of the glorious works of art, of letters and science. *Through these was hastened the intellectual progress of the West*" Draper sarcastically reports.<sup>80</sup>

Draper points out that while the Byzantines priceless treasures in art, which the European Crusaders now stole and vandalized, was in fact art the Byzantines themselves had copied. The Byzantine Christians "who had possessed in art and letters all the best models of the world, yet in a thousand years they never produced one original." Why was it, he asks, that Byzantines themselves had not been able to expand to higher levels though possessed of that ancient pagan Greek heritage? "What was it that produced this barrenness, this intellectual degradation in Constantinople? *The tyranny of Theology over Thought*" concludes Draper, himself a practicing Christian.<sup>81</sup>

The Latin Crusaders ruled the Byzantine Empire for fifty-seven years. In that time, "the Crusaders now wanted to divide up their new territories among themselves into fiefdoms, on the European model." The Latin rule however was soon overturned. "In 1261, the Greeks managed to fight the Latins, drive them out and put a Greek Emperor on the throne of Byzantium once more. But the ancient empire had been fatally wounded." When news of the incredible massacre, rape, looting of valuable and religious relics in Constantinople by the Crusaders had reached Pope Innocent III, it was said he considered excommunicating the Crusaders responsible. But he did not. This massacre however had spelled the deathknell of the Byzantine Empire. *When, therefore, the Turks attacked again they were able to easily overthrow the Byzantine Empire.* "It may be that their [Latin's] conquest of Constantinople gravely weakened the Greek empire and hastened her final defeat by the Ottoman Turks in 1453" says Armstrong. In their perpetual hostilities towards each other, the Turks were easily able to annex Constantinople in 1453.

But now there was a new challenge for the Pope in the south of France. A new reform sect of Christianity had emerged, and the same Pope Innocent III declared a new Crusade against *Christians* for practicing it.

"This new type of Crusade was instigated by Pope Innocent III...this Crusade was called to fight not the Muslims in the Near East but Christians in the south of France"<sup>82</sup> reports Armstrong. Popes saw it as their duty to crush every religious viewpoint (even Christian) not their own: Arianism, Manichaeans, Monophysites, Nestorians. The Greek Orthodox, the other powerful one, had done the same, of course. Both had their own, perennial campaign to obliterate Islam and its believers. Now Innocent III looked on the Cathari (or Pure Ones) Christian movement as the one to destroy instantly. *The Pope who had recently claimed he was "shocked" that the Crusaders had killed so many Byzantine Christians was now calling for the extermination of the Cathari Christians in France.*

This new campaign to crush the Cathari movement had far-reaching effect. The movement itself, was of course thoroughly crushed, its adherents killed and all its teaching documents destroyed, so that all that survived to tell the world what it had been was *what Rome said it was*. "None of their writings survived the Crusade, so our only source of knowledge about their faith is the polemic of their Catholic enemies"<sup>83</sup> (ibid). But what makes the Cathari movement very significant is that this form of Christianity was *already being practiced in Eastern Europe. It had evolved from the teachings of Jesus with an esoteric approach on the lines of Zoroastrian and Gnostic beliefs.*

The gruesome holocaust inflicted upon the Bosnians in the twentieth century had its roots in their initial rejection of Catholicism and the ruthless action of the "established" Church against them because of this rejection. We shall be examining the true history of the Bosnian tragedy later. What we need to note here is that this brief Cathari movement is another example of the "domino" effect emanating from Eastern Europe. Scholars of the nineteenth century like Sir Arthur Evans, British writer and intellectual, considered the Bosnian religious revolution as the first Protestant movement, which Europe has never properly acknowledged, and the Cathari movement adds poof to that theory. "Bosnia presents the unique phenomenon of a protestant State existing within the limits of the Holy Roman Empire...England herself and the most enlightened countries of the modern world may owe a debt, which it is hard to estimate, to the Bogomiles [sic] of Bosnia" (*Through Bosnia and the Herzegovina on Foot*, - p.xlii, xliii, *Historical Review of Bosnia*). The Bosnians were, as we shall see, not only constantly brutalized for seeking religious freedom, but almost all of the material pertaining to their form of Christianity, no longer exists.<sup>84</sup> "The history of these champions of a purer religion has been written by their enemies, and ignored by those who owe most to their heroism" says Sir Arthur Evans (xliii, *Historical Review of Bosnia*, italics added).

Malcolm argues strongly against the prevailing belief that Bosnian Christianity was Bogomile, which had spread to other parts of Slavic lands; he argues that Bosnian Christianity was of a different variety. With Malcolm's' impeccable credentials it is hard to argue against this but, that issue is not germane for our purpose. In Croatia: *Land, People, Culture*, (Prof. Francis Eterovitch and Prof.

Christopher Spalatin editors, University of Toronto, 1970) we are told "Manichaeism was an heretical religious movement that combined Christian concepts with the old Iranian [Zoroastrian] dualism. From the Bogomiles in Bulgaria the religion spread through Albania and across the Adriatic to Italy and France, where the adherents were called Patarenes and Albigenses respectively."<sup>85</sup>

In the subsequent brutal repression, killings and tortures of the Bosnians at the instance of the Catholic Church, most of the written documents were either destroyed or lost, while much of what has been claimed since about their form of Christianity comes to us from Catholic sources. However, "there is one piece of evidence from within Bosnia which appears to show that they exerted a major influence. It is a Bosnian manuscript text, in Slavic (two short sequences of responses, the Lord's Prayer and a reading from St. John's Gospel) which corresponded closely to the text of a Cathar ritual known to have been used in Lyon in the thirteenth century" says Malcolm (italics added).<sup>86</sup> There was, therefore, the Bosnian influence upon the Cathar faith.

If Pope Innocent III's furious crusade against the Cathars in Lyon, France, in the region of Toulouse and Languedoc, is an indication of the rage which this form of puritanical, esoteric Christianity aroused in the established Church, its brutality towards the Bosnian Christians in the relatively obscure Slavic areas of Europe, the cradle of such "heresy" had to be beyond description. And we can only surmise the extent of Church fury later when these "heretics", including most of the oldest aristocracy of Eastern Europe, became Muslims!

"From the middle of the Twelfth century missionaries had traveled from Eastern Europe and had preached to Westerners a different form of Christianity." Its adherents now were those who had never been satisfied with the Clunian reforms. "These new Christians called themselves the Cathari or the Pure Ones. None of their writings survived the [Catholic] Crusade, so our only source of knowledge about their faith is the polemic of their Catholic enemies, who may have distorted their teaching. It seems that Catharism was another form of a dualistic religion that went back to the very first days of Christianity. It had inspired the Gnostic Christians of the second and third centuries and also the Manichaeans, who had come from Persia and converted many Christians during the fifth and sixth centuries... Like the Gnostics and the Manichaeans, the Catharists believed that God was engaged in a constant battle with an Evil Principle who was not divine himself but who had created the world...God had sent Jesus to save mankind from the world of evil matter. The Cathars did not believe that Jesus was God...[they] spent their lives trying to purify themselves from the physical and seeking the spiritual world...Catharism opposed the whole ethos of crusading Christianity...Catharists did not believe Jesus had died on the Cross."<sup>87</sup> This is based on Catholic interpretation of the Catharist faith as none of Catharist writings were permitted to survive.



There was a similar movement in northern France, but the Catharist movement was more organized and viewed by Rome as the Catholic Church's greatest threat in Western Europe. At first Innocent III tried to provide a "Catholic alternative to the Catharists." Led by Dominic Guzman, the Dominican was "a new kind of monk who called himself a friar, a brother...[but] they actually made little impression. There were very few converts from Catharism to orthodoxy and the heresy [sic] continued to spread. Innocent now felt that there was no other solution to the problem but the sword, and on November 17, 1207, he wrote to King Philip Augustus urging him to take an army to fight the heretics in the region of Languedoc, offering him indulgences that were similar to those given to people who went on a Crusade to the Holy Land to fight the Muslims. For the first time in Europe, a Pope was calling upon Christians to kill other Christians: Innocent was setting a precedent for a new kind of holy war that would become an incurable disease in Europe."<sup>88</sup> It was to become the precedent for future religious wars among Christians in a Europe always all too willing to take to battle for power and land. Catholics and Protestants would later be unleashed by cunning rulers to bloody battles in self-righteous passions, especially between France and England, England and Scotland, and the unending brutalities in Ireland.

Now Pope Innocent III made wild accusations against the Catharists. Armstrong says "this hysterical description bore no relation at all to the devout Catharists" (ibid). To the pope, "even the Catharists' virtuous lives and wise arguments were satanic traps to entice the hapless Christians into a pit of bottomless evil", as he wrote to King Philip Augustus. This "could not be cured by a poultice but only by the knife, so Philip must arm himself strongly and 'eliminate such harmful filth'...hitherto in crusading jargon 'filth' had meant only Muslims."<sup>89</sup>

At first Philip Augustus wanted more "guarantees" from the Pope; presumably these were given, and with this partnership, the movement against the Catharists seemed to have gained some popularity. Simon de Monfort was very eager to join and fight. But there were other nobles like Count Raymond of Toulouse who refused to participate. By a remarkable coincidence, the Pope's legate, sent to convince the very reluctant Count Raymond to join this crusade, was killed while on the Count's lands and great passions were aroused in the belief that the Count's pro-Catharist sympathizers had killed him. Innocent accused the Count himself of being involved in the "martyrdom" of Peter, his legate, and threatened to excommunicate the Count and his supporters. And he called upon Christians to join in this Crusade against the Catharists "granting your remission of sins, not to delay in making haste to combat so many evils and to make it your business to bring peace to those people in the name of him who is the *God of peace and love*"<sup>90</sup> (quoting from the text of the letter in *The Crusades: Idea and Reality*, Rile-Smith, London 1981). Pope Innocent even declared that these Catharists "were worse than Muslims"! In 1209, the Crusade against Catharists was launched. "On July 22 the army surrounded the city of Beziers...When the city surrendered and the Crusaders went out to deal the judgment of God, it is said that the soldiers asked the abbot [Arnaud-Amalric, the Abbot of Citeaux, leading the forces] how they could distinguish the

heretics from the Catholics and that Arnould replied 'Kill them all; God will know his own'. Every single inhabitant of the city was massacred." Count Raymond-Roger of Beziers [who had also refused to participate in the Crusade] "gave himself up to the Crusaders, was thrown into prison and...conveniently died in prison."

Simon of Monfort was given his fiefdom, and he proceeded to invade southern France "capturing one Catharist center after another, burning out heretics...Simon had become one of the richest and most powerful landowners in France during the crusade. *Every time he conquered a city he automatically became its overlord*"<sup>92</sup>

The extermination of the Catharists had presented no problem as they were Christian pacifists who abhorred the sword; but now the inhabitants of all of Southern France (who were Catharists) saw that in the process of this extermination of the Catharists, the Northerners were conquering their lands as well; so now "for nearly twenty years southerners fought against the northern representatives of their King, even though their struggle was hopeless. It would be 1229 before a later Crusade brought 'peace' to France and took the Crusade against Christians into a frightening new phase."<sup>93</sup> Needless to add, emotions and anger had to be redirected away from Europe placed against those Muslims.

Just how this "frightening new phase" came about in fact would be hard to fully decipher from this distance of time. But clearly faith was in turmoil with the brutal extermination of the Catharists. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, there was prosperity arriving in Europe but the gap between the rich and the poor was widening dramatically, and among the poor "whole families of men, women and children were forced to live wandering, mendicant lives."<sup>94</sup> "In 1212, the *pueri* (literally, children, but a contemptuous label for all poor, young and old) formed a religious protest movement." One French *puer* named Stephen said he had a vision of Jesus, who gave him a letter to take to King Philip Augustus, pleading the cause of the poor. Like Peter the Hermit at the time of the First Crusade, Stephen actually produced a letter written by Jesus Christ. About the same time, a similar *pueri* movement had started in Germany, and a *puer* called Nicholas led those marchers. Jesus, they said, identified with the poor.

Thirty years later "when later chroniclers read about these strange processions, they naturally translated the word *pueri* as 'children'" (ibid).<sup>95</sup> That led to claims that these "children" Stephen and Nicholas had been asked by Jesus himself to lead a Crusade against the Muslims and recover the Holy Land!

These were the facts which led to the ridiculous "Children's Crusade." It would be amusing if it were not so tragic. Reports claimed that the children would march across Europe, and miraculously the waters of the Mediterranean would part and they would make their way to the Holy Land.

The children suffered greatly all the way. Many died on the long march, across Europe, from Germany and France. Many were kidnapped on the way. Only one in three are reported to have actually reached the Mediterranean area, and here the Sea refused to part for them. They began the awful journey back home, many died, yet more were kidnapped. Some who were lured to ships promising to take them across the Mediterranean; instead they were sold "as slaves

to the Muslims of North Africa and Egypt. Years later *one of them returned home to tell the story*.<sup>96</sup> Somehow this categorical claim that they were sold to Muslims, because one boy who returned home said so, must be considered with a little skepticism. *It is of course possible that this happened, but one boy returning home to his sympathetic town, is apt to seek the most dramatic and face-saving story to tell from the hugely humiliating adventure of the "Children's Crusade", and what better tale than that the vile Muslims bought them and made them slaves?*

The fact that the forecasts of miraculous victory had been wrong was traumatic all across Europe. So there was a growing belief now that the next Crusade should be by the poor, or by children as Jesus himself had loved the poor. But most of all, there was a craving to finding a miracle leader, chosen by God to lead Europe to victory.

And at this time here was a story about a boy (though by no means poor), which spread across Europe with great expectations. Frederick Hohenstaufen, only son of Emperor Henry VI was born December 26, 1194 in southern Italy; his mother was Queen Constance, the Norman heiress to Sicily. From infancy, stories about him had abounded, some claiming he was destined to be the yet another Last Emperor (before the Second Coming of Christ). After his father died, Frederick ruled as King of Sicily, under protection of Pope Innocent III. In 1210, Kaiser Otto IV of Germany accompanied by some German nobles, elected to come south and claim Sicily from Frederick. To protect his ward, Pope Innocent excommunicated the Kaiser, gave his own support to the factions opposing the Kaiser; King Philip Augustus of France dutifully also applied pressure on behalf of the Pope, and the German nobles now decided to dethrone Otto and replace him with Sicily's young Frederick. This sudden change in his fortune, from almost certain death to the throne of Germany, was seen again as an omen that Frederick was a Chosen One; so emboldened was Frederick now that, ignoring the advice of those who warned him that Otto was still very powerful in Germany, he decided to go to Germany and claim the throne. He met with disasters on the way, even assassination attempts but the 17-year-old youth survived, so there was further conviction that he had divine protection for a special mission. Otto set out to confront him, but apparently Frederick's very appearance won over the public, and against all odds he survived to become, in fact, the crowned King of Germany in Mainz in December 1212.

Poets raved about his divine mission. As he was also the grandson of Frederick Barbarossa (the Crusader who had drowned during the earlier Crusade), his popularity continued to grow, and in 1215 he was officially crowned in Aachen Cathedral and sat on Charlemagne's throne. Now he aroused even more passions by picking up the Cross. To the superstitious it meant this divinely guided young man was to lead another crusade; he would become King David conquering Jerusalem.

In spite of the enormous fervor that he aroused, getting the Fifth Crusade together was difficult. After the Lateran Council of 1215, Pope Innocent III had enthusiastically sent preachers all across Europe, calling for a Crusade; with the charismatic Frederick II in charge, it seemed just the right time. But "the nobles

seemed even more reluctant ...than they had been in 1202. When Innocent III died in 1216 his successor Honorius III found it very difficult to organize a Crusade; only a few nobles set out that year with King Andrew of Hungary... [and] The Franks [in the Holy Land] did not want a Crusade...They were wary of endangering the security of their tiny state and were afraid that a holy war would destroy the excellent trading arrangements they were currently enjoying with the Muslims."<sup>97</sup> In fact, this was more proof that the Muslims who could so easily have destroyed that "tiny state" were willing to lead a peaceful and mutually profitable existence alongside the Franks, despite the many bad experiences of the past from such trust. Even in Egypt, there were "excellent relations with the 3000 Pisan, Venetian and Genoan merchants and traders who lived and worked in Cairo. It seemed that this secular contact had made it possible for Christians and Muslims to live together in peace to their mutual advantage, but it seemed immoral to the newcomer, Bishop James of Vitry. He was also disturbed by the Franks' oriental lifestyle and seemed to equate the Franks' abandoning of a Western culture identity with a denial of the Christian faith itself. The Franks have gone native, he wrote in disgust: *they were fitter for the baths than for battle*; they did not let their wives go to church more than once a year but would send them to the *baths* three times a week" says Armstrong<sup>98</sup> quoting Normal Daniel *The Arabs and Medieval Europe* London 1975. The European world, unused to bathing, did not only look upon it with suspicion, but as an Islamic practice, somehow *unChristian*. Muslims had introduced bathing in Spain. And, as we shall see, with the extermination and expulsion of Muslims from Spain after the fifteenth century, bathing was forbidden, as an act punishable with death as it proved that the Muslims converted to Christianity had *not* really converted.

In 1217 Duke Leopold of Austria did bring an army, and along with Hungarian forces, conducted one of those invasions, which Western history books simply ignore as not worthy of being given a "number" among the Crusades. Leopold's army and the Hungarians conducted "a few desultory raids in Galilee", picked up some relics and valuables, and went home.<sup>99</sup> "But in 1218 three fleets from Fresco, France and England arrived in Acre and decided to revive the old plan of capturing Egypt" (ibid). They took Damietta by surprise, as the Egyptians, complacent after the recent peace, never expected this new onslaught. In fact the Sultan of Egypt was so shocked that he collapsed and died of a heart attack.

A Joyous Pope sent legate Cardinal Pelagius to lead further invasions. But the Crusaders were now suddenly struck with a plague, which turned their skins black and killed many of the soldiers. But Pelagius insisted that they force their advantage and attack another city, and they attacked and took al-Adilya. Now news reached the Muslims that German King Frederick was on his way with a huge army. In the meanwhile, there was a new approach tried by the Christians, something they had never attempted before: *to preach and convert without the sword*. Hitherto, the Christians had always believed that Muslims must be killed, not converted. Now Francis of Assisi had come East and sought permission to preach to Sultan al-Kamil of Egypt, Saladin nephew and the son of Sultan al-Malik who had



died at the Christian invasion of Damietta. Francis had renounced the world and worldly goods, lived in poverty and to preach.

"Provided that Francis did not insult Mohammed or Islam, al-Kamil would have no objection to listening to him expound the gospel message, and it seems he listened to Francis for three days and offered him precious gifts at the end of the visit. Francis naturally refused, even when the Sultan urged him to give them to the churches and the poor Christians...Then he sent Francis back to the Christian camp, 'with every mark of respect and in complete safety'. Needless to say, the Sultan was not converted," Side by side, the Fifth Crusaders continued their invasion. Perhaps because a famine now threatened Egypt, among its other problems, or perhaps from yet another desire to make a grand gesture (in the Saladin style), which the Christians might appreciate, the Sultan made a grand gesture. "At the end of October the Sultan sent two Frankish prisoners of war to Pelagius with extraordinary generous terms: if the Crusaders would leave Egypt, *he would return Jerusalem, all central Palestine and Galilee*"<sup>101</sup> The gesture perhaps also illustrates how tired Muslims were of these incessant wars.

But Pelagius *refused* the offer. Some Western historians say the reason for the refusal was that their possessions would be vulnerable to attack once the Crusaders returned to Europe (ignoring the fact that Muslims had allowed the fledgling Christian lands to survive without attack). The true reason for this rejection should be clear to any impartial observer: Cardinal Pelagius was convinced that if the Muslims were so vulnerable as to make such an offer to the Christian forces already fighting them, how much more vulnerable would they be when the huge forces under Kaiser Frederick arrived? He was sure that once those additional forces arrived, the Christians could conquer all of the Middle East, not just the Holy Land.

So the war recommenced. But King Frederick of Germany did *not* arrive with his huge forces. He was facing insurrections within his German kingdom and apparently did not feel it would be safe to leave it at this time. Pope Honorius attempted to force him, to no avail. When the war resumed, Sultan al-Kamil's brother Sultan al-Mu'azzan had commenced an offensive in 1220, King John of Acre returned to Acre defend his territories, but in 1221 Crusaders were ordered by Cardinal Pelagius to invade Cairo, along with King John and his forces. John of Joinville (the Christian Chronicler) reports that the Crusaders had 630 ships, 5000 knights, 4000 archers and 40,000 infantrymen.

The terrified citizens of Cairo sought to escape the city. But its soldiers had a plan, and it worked. As the Crusaders advanced on the city "The Muslim soldiers demolished the dikes [of the rising Nile], troops moved in to cut off the exit routes and within a few hours the Christian army was ignominiously imprisoned on an island of mud. No Western writer ever associates this or the earlier plague which hit the Crusaders as God's act, as everyone does the plague and drowning of Pharaoh's forces which saved the Jews. Pelagius had to sue for peace to save his army from annihilation, and naturally this time al-Kamil's terms were far less generous. The Crusaders must sign a truce for eight years and leave Egypt

immediately; in return they could sail home unmolested."<sup>102</sup> By any standards, this was not, in the circumstances, "far less generous." It was, in fact, a magnanimous gesture against invaders. The Crusaders were allowed to return home, as promised.

In Europe, that other Crusade (against the Christian Catharist) had continued. And "it was proving ineffective" in exterminating all the Catharists. "Even though heretics were still burned in large numbers, the heresy continued to spread and seemed ineradicable," says Armstrong. Prof. Draper provides some specifics. "At the Church of St. Mary Magdalene 7000 persons were massacred...In the town twenty thousand were slaughtered, and the place then fired...At the massacre of Lavaur 400 people were burned in one pile. Language has no powers to express the atrocities that took place at the capture of different towns. Ecclesiastical vengeance rioted in luxury...*From the reek of murdered women, mutilated children, and ruined cities, the Inquisition, that infernal institution, arose.*"<sup>103</sup> There was now also the psychological problem from the humiliating defeat of the Sixth Crusade against the Muslims. When these Crusaders returned, the finger of blame was pointed at King Frederick of Germany for not proceeding on the Crusade. Frederick felt sufficiently pressured to promise to proceed on a Crusade in a few years.

#### ( 12 )

The peaceful missionary visit of Francis of Assisi to the Middle East was followed by visits of several Franciscan missionaries to Muslim Spain and North Africa. But these visits were not innocent nor peaceful. These missionaries seemed determined to create riotous reactions, and provoke crisis. This "proved to be a new type of Crusade" says Armstrong. These missionaries to Spain and Africa in that era went "not to save souls but to achieve martyrdom...They tried to break into a mosque during Friday prayers [in Seville] and when they were driven away, they stood outside the Emir's palace and shouted abuse against Mohammed and Islam. They were not reaching out to the Muslims in peace and love but mounting an aggressive assault. The Muslim authorities were forced to arrest them, even though they were reluctant to do so...eventually deported them to Morocco. Here the Franciscans went straight into a new offensive, behaving in exactly the same way, and were deported from one area to another on two more occasions by the embarrassed authorities. *On one occasion the local Christians pressured the Muslims to get rid of them*" (Armstrong p. 409). Francis of Assisi's reaction to this suggested, "he did not disapprove of this other violent missionary offensive. This would prove to be the way the Franciscans would continue to preach to the Muslims. James of Vitry noticed these methods in the Holy Land: 'The Saracens listen willingly to the Friars Minor when they speak of the faith of Christ and the teaching of the Gospels. But when their words openly contradict Mohammed, who appears in their sermons as a perfidious liar, they strike them without respect'. It was, therefore wholly appropriate that the first [priestly] mission to the Muslims occurred in the context of a Crusade, for missionary activity was a child of crusading and part of the war of the West against the East."<sup>104</sup>

"It seems that the aggression that inspired these missionaries was not always confined to a moral assault on the Muslims. Instead of seeking to save the souls of the Muslims they 'preached' to, the Franciscans actually sought to *compound* their damnation. In 1227 a group of seven Franciscans who had preached their way into prison in Ceuto, Morocco, wrote home to say that the main object of their mission had been 'the death and damnation of the infidels'. Jesus had said anyone who rejected the faith would be damned: 'He who believes and is baptized will be saved; he who does not believe will be condemned' (Mark 16:16). By ensuring that the Muslims were forced to reject the faith that was presented to them so insultingly...the missionaries saw to it that they were damned indeed. None of the first missionaries seemed to be concerned with real conversion...This very strange, aggressive and exclusive attitude was obviously born of the Crusades...When Europeans began their colonizing ventures in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries, missionaries followed in their train and were encouraged by the colonists, some of whom had no religious beliefs, as a valuable part of the Westernizing process" says the incisive Armstrong (p. 410, 411).<sup>105</sup>

(13)

Frederick II, Kaiser of Germany, Holy Roman Emperor, Ruler of Sicily, the Boy of Apulia, *Stupo Mundi* (the boy wonder), the Chosen One, the Last Emperor, was now being seen by the Pope, as the devil! The Pope was aghast to find that Frederick was friendly with Muslims. Stories began to be spread, about Frederick this time not about the "miracles" around him as a boy, which the Pope and Christians had praised all across Europe, but now about what a terrible, cruel and self-indulgent person he was, a renegade, even the Antichrist!

Pope Gregory IX had issued decree even more severe on Muslims and Jews than his predecessors. "Muslims and Jews...were to wear distinctive clothing...On Christian holidays Muslims and Jews were not to appear in the street, etc." The problem was that Frederick grew up in Sicily when "the Norman conquerors of Sicily had actually encouraged the Muslims and made use of their superior intellectual talents. Many Muslims held important positions at court. At court Arabs were allowed to pray in the direction of Mecca at the proper times and keep the Ramadan fast, even though the Normans had destroyed the most important mosque in Palermo. The policy was to make war against Islam but to live in peace with Muslims."<sup>106</sup> This "peace" with Muslims helped to upgrade knowledge and learning among the Christians in Sicily. Frederick himself was very keen on acquiring knowledge. He had studied Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, among other languages and corresponded with Muslim scholars.

He had grown up in that cosmopolitan atmosphere. But Germany, as yet very backward, even barbaric in comparison, was different. "When he left Sicily in 1212 for Germany, he encountered an intolerance and ignorance which were quite alien to him and which he would despise all his life" (ibid)<sup>107</sup>. The Pope had hoped that in Germany, Frederick would change. Evidently he had not.

So bigotry made inroads even in Sicily, with the Pope furiously opposed to the freedoms and friendship the Muslims enjoyed. "Towards the end of the twelfth century the great Arab traveler Ibn Jubayr had noticed that, although Muslims were very successful at the court of Palermo, they seemed frightened and uneasy. They had good reason. At the beginning of the thirteenth century the Sicilian population declared open war on the Muslims: they expelled them from cities and settlements, and then drove them from the fertile plains into the mountains where they lived as virtual outlaws"(ibid).

When Frederick returned from Germany to Sicily in 1221, he found an adroit way to resolve the issue, so that what Armstrong calls the superior intellectual talents of the Muslims would not be lost entirely. To appease the prejudices, which now ruled much of the Christian population there, he forced the Muslims out to the mountains; then, in 1223 he ordered the Muslims to be first interred and then shipped to the old fortress city of Lucera in Apulia. Then, he gradually allowed the Muslims "to build their own city-state. They had their own amir, their own qadis, sheikhs and imams. They built mosques and the muezzin sounded loudly and freely. Within the city, Frederick built a scientific institute for the study of speculative science, and he made the Muslims of Lucera his favored court officials. 'Most of his officials and courtiers were Muslims' wrote Arab historian Jamalad-Din ibn Wasil, 'and in his camp the call to prayer and even the canon prayers themselves were openly heard'. ...Lucera and Frederick's private Muslim army were a scandal in Europe. The Arabs were fanatically loyal to Frederick and called him their sultan."<sup>108</sup> Was Frederick using the Muslims to improve the quality of life for the Christians? Was the Muslim "fanatical" loyalty to him because he saved them from the fierce hostility of the masses, and for the opportunities he provided for them to pursue further experiments and exploration of the sciences? Were at least some of them willing to abandon Islam to appease bigotry or from convictions? Certainly escape was not possible. Lucera was a refugee camp and a reservation. The Muslims had to live there.

The remarkable courage (or obstinacy) of Frederick in fraternizing with Muslims can better be understood when we note that, along with a fierce campaign from the Church, many more prohibitions had been added against contacts with Muslims and Jews in recent years. These had helped change the attitudes of the masses into their current hate towards Muslims and Jews everywhere, including southern Italy and Sicily. "The Lateral [papal] Councils of 1179 and 1216 issued directives which cut people off from Muslims and Jews and forbade normal contact or coexistence. Any Christian who took service in the house of a Muslim or a Jew was to be *excommunicated*, as was anybody who looked after their [Muslim and Jewish] children; anybody who traded with Muslims who took merchandise to Islamic countries and sailed in their 'piratical' ships was to be *excommunicated* and his property confiscated."<sup>109</sup> Pope Gregory IX (cousin of Innocent III) who became Pope in 1227 added his own prohibitions. Muslims and Jews living in Christian countries were to wear *distinctive clothing* to distinguish them clearly from the Christian population. On Christian holidays, Muslims and Jews were not to appear in the street; they must not hold public office in a Christian country and Muslims were not allowed to assail the ears of the [Christian]



faithful by the call of the muezzin" (Norman Daniel, *The Arabs and Medieval Europe*, p. 356, London, 1976). The foundations of the policy, which would lead to the Inquisition and holocaust in Spain, were being laid.

Initially, some of the Normans had ignored these prohibitions, but the power of the Church's incessant campaigning had gradually affected public attitudes so that by the time Frederick returned from Germany, it was highly dangerous for the king to ignore these prohibitions, and fraternize so freely with the Muslims as Frederick did once again.

The Muslims, however, remained reasonably safe during his reign and that of his son Manfred. But then King Charles of Anjou took the territories at the end of the century. Charles saw Muslims in the same light that the Popes had done: "a nest of pestilence...pollution...plague and filthy infection of Apulia."<sup>110</sup> And so "In 1301 the French attacked the city, massacred the Muslim inhabitants, turned the mosque into a church and renamed Lucera the City of St. Mary."<sup>111</sup>

But that was in the future. Now in 1227, when Frederick announced his intention to lead a Sixth Crusade, there was considerable excitement. Even though so many were appalled and angry about his friendship and involvement with the Muslims, his courage in standing up against a series of Popes, first against Innocent III, then against Honorius and now against Gregory IX, was admired by many as indicative of his special "divine mission". Even some nobles, wishing they too could have the courage to confront the papacy on the financial demands imposed by the popes upon them, secretly admired Frederick.

Frederick had already taken the Teutonic Knights in Germany under his direct command, away from the pope, and in 1226 he sent them to Prussia to "Christianize" that pagan land and bring it under his own domain. In the meanwhile he had started correspondence with Sultan al-Kamil. The reports which al-Kamil had received confirmed that this very unusual Christian king "allowed the muezzin to summon Muslims to prayer, whose most powerful officers and court officials were Muslims, and who spoke Arabic fluently...[and that] the emperor was full of contempt for the barbarous Europeans, especially for the Pope of Rome"<sup>112</sup>. In their correspondence, al-Kamil and Frederick "discussed Aristotle, jurisprudence, the immortality of the soul." The Sultan sent gifts to Frederick and in 1227 invited Frederick to come East. Quoting an Arab source (Amin Maarouf) Armstrong says that al-Kamil had "quarreled with his brother al-Mu'azzam, ruler of Damascus and Jerusalem, and told Frederick that he would be very happy to help him conquer Jerusalem from his brother."<sup>113</sup>

Frederick, who had been excommunicated by the Pope recently for not going to the Crusade when ordered to do so, was very pleased at this solution.

However, when he sailed with his Muslim soldiers alongside his Teutonic Knights, the Pope and other clerics and laymen, were scandalized. On the way, the Crusaders, including Frederick were struck with malaria. To recover, Frederick had himself disembarked at Ontranto, whereupon the Pope, assuming he had simply elected not to proceed with the Crusade, excommunicated him again. And the Pope now called for another Crusade among Christian believers, *this one to invade and conquer Frederick's southern Italian possessions!*

As he was excommunicated, Frederick would not qualify as leader of the Crusade against the Muslims. He wrote to fellow-monarchs in Europe to persuade the Pope to lift the excommunication, that he was now proceeding from Brindisi on the assumption that this would be done. Pope Gregory furiously excommunicated him again — perhaps the only case of treble-excommunication in Christian history. And the Pope himself "actually invaded his [Frederick's] Italian lands".<sup>114</sup>

But now, Sultan al-Mu'azzam (al-Kamil's brother with whom he was feuding) had suddenly died and his young son al-Nasir now administered Jerusalem. *Therefore Sultan al-Kamil felt that he did not need to give Jerusalem away to the Christians out of animosity towards his brother.* In fact, Al-Kamil now deeply regretted having given his word to Frederick who was already on his way. Sensing that conditions had changed regarding the free gift of Jerusalem, Frederick now wrote a pleading letter to al-Kamil: " 'I am your friend' he wrote to al-Kamil. 'It was you who urged me to make the trip. The Pope and all the kings of the West now know of my mission. If I return empty-handed, I would lose much prestige.'" Al-Kamil now sent gifts to Frederick and a letter explaining that he too was answerable to his people, that "to give up Jerusalem without a fight would be politically dangerous, because of the devotion the Muslims felt for the Holy City. But he did not want to fight a wasteful war with his friend" (ibid).<sup>115</sup>

At the end of November 1228, between them, they worked out a charade. Frederick marched with a small Christian army of Acre, an army so small that it could be easily defeated. But following a prearranged plan with al-Kamil, before any "battle" could start, he asked publicly for peace talks in private with al-Kamil. Al-Kamil sent Fakr ad-Din, his trusted lieutenant to talk in secret with Frederick. Then they announced they had agreed on terms; a peace treaty was signed on February 29, 1229, *giving Jerusalem to Frederick, in effect, as a gift.*

"The treaty must be one of the most extraordinary diplomatic achievements [for the Christians] of all time. Without fighting a single Muslim, Frederick had managed to win back Jerusalem...There would be a truce between Muslims and Christians for ten years" writes Armstrong<sup>116</sup>. The Christians got Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth, also the western Galilee. "The Muslims would evacuate Jerusalem, but they would keep the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa and a small group of *imams and Ulema* would remain there. Muslims would be able to pray at these shrines and visit the city as unarmed pilgrims" (ibid)

The Muslim masses and their *Ulema* were stunned with grief. "On that day one saw nothing but weeping men and women, wrote Ibn Wasil. In his prolix history *Mir'at az-Zaman* (The Mirror of the Times), Sheikh al-Jauzi wrote that his sermon dwelled on the grief and shame that al-Kamil had inflicted on the Muslim people: 'O shame upon the Muslim rulers!' he cried as the sobbing in the mosque rose to a crescendo"<sup>116</sup>.

The Muslim populace had suffered enormously from the start of the Crusades in 1096 for so many generations, lost so many loved ones and possessions, suffered rape and pillage, but they had sought comfort in prayer and by the argument of their political and religious leaders with thoughts of the great cause in which they

were suffering, the cause of defending their lands, their religion. Now, suddenly, when the new Crusaders could so easily have been defeated they had been *gifted* Jerusalem. There was great grief and lamentation.

"Undismayed by these lamentations, Frederick marched to Jerusalem for his coronation, accompanied by the Teutonic Knights and the largely Arab imperial guard. More absurdities ensued. The Bishop of Caesara was horrified that Jerusalem should open its gates to an excommunicated emperor so he rushed there and put the holiest city in the world under an interdict [formal prohibition from entry]. Frederick marched straight to the Holy Sepulchre Church and because no priest or prelate would crown him, strode to the high altar, seized the crown and placed it on his own head. It was a superb affirmation of his position: he received his power from God and did not need the mediation of the Church"<sup>17</sup> says Armstrong. Kantorowicz reports (in *Frederick the Second* p. 200) that in his speech, Frederick joyously said "Behold, now is the day of salvation!" To many Christians this brought back the possibility that Frederick was really the Last Emperor, sent to establish the Kingdom of God.

But then Frederick is reported to have gone to visit the Muslim shrines; he talked with the Muslims in Arabic, climbed to the top of the Dome of the Rock, walked to al-Aqsa. "When he saw a priest entering the mosque with a new testament, Frederick beat him up: 'By God, if one of you dares to step in here again without permission, I will pluck his eyes out!' That night the Qadi had ordered the muezzin to be silent as a mark of respect for the Christian Emperor, and Frederick was bitterly disappointed. *The only reason he had wanted to sleep in Jerusalem, he said sadly the next morning, was to hear the muezzin in the Holy City*"<sup>18</sup>.

Armstrong reports that there were extremists on both sides who were angry at Frederick. One Sheikh Ibn al-Jawzi was furious at the terms of the treaty, saw Frederick as a cynic whose "Christianity was merely a game to him". The Templars were also angry with him, are said to have contacted al-Kamil, "told him that the Emperor would be ungarded and suggested that he have him assassinated"<sup>19</sup> writes Armstrong. The Templars disliked Frederick, but why would they expect al-Kamil, so close to Frederick that he had been willing to make a gift of Jerusalem and other lands to save Frederick's reputation, now agree to assassinate him? In any case, Frederick safely returned to Europe.

In Europe, Frederick was suddenly in great favor once again, a holy man. "Frederick managed to sort out his difficulties with Pope Gregory when he returned to Europe and signed the Treaty of San Germano with him in 1230...[But] He was seen by discontented Christians who hated the popes as a liberator and their champion against Rome... So great was adulation for Frederick that when he died in 1250 a belief developed that he would return and save the world. He would be a Christian Messiah... People in the Holy Roman Empire *prayed to him* after his death as though he was indeed an almost divine figure. 'Our forefathers looked no more eagerly for the *coming of Christ than we do for thine*' wrote a governor whose troops were in danger. 'Come to free and rejoice us. Show us thy countenance and we shall find salvation'. *Frederick had stirred the imagination of Europe so*

*deeply that the belief in his Second Coming became very popular among the disenchanting people in Europe, who wanted a different kind of Christianity*"<sup>120</sup>.

Even when he was alive, there were a segment of disenchanting Christians who preferred Frederick's friendly approach to Muslims to the bitter hate of the pope. But the pope was even more disgusted that though he had reached out to Frederick, the latter continued his friendship with Muslims; once more the pope condemned him. In 1239 Pope Gregory wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury that the specter of evil in Revelations "was now seen to be Frederick." Matthew Paris, who had once been the English secretary of Eleanor of Aquitaine [former wife of Louis of France, then of England's King Henry] "wrote that Frederick felt closer to Islam than to Christianity."<sup>121</sup>

However, with the public softening of his views somewhat, greatly impressed with what Frederick's friendship with the Muslims had won for him, there was a shrewd attempt by the Church to seem *also* to be softening their views and *then present Islam in distorted form yet seeming to be fair*. It was probably in order to win the approval of the large and growing segment of dissenting Christians that some Christian "scholars" now commenced to write about Islam, just as some Catholic authors had claimed to be interested in checking the truth about the Cluny faith. Soon hate towards Islam was rekindled. Frederick's "enemies became the establishment and intolerance of Muslims became an indelible habit in Europe...the Dominican Ramon Marti who wrote the *Four Condemnation*, also claimed to be serious, objective works of scholarship [about Islam]. But the title of Ramon Marti's work shows their attitude: they were not writing to understand but to condemn. They wanted to induce a certain emotional response in their readers and create a state of mind, which would lead Christians to see Islam as an absolute evil and an unmanageable danger. These new works on the religion [of Islam] that they insisted on calling 'Mohammedanism' repeated all the old myths and added some of their own...Riccolardo da Monte Croce traveled in Muslims countries and was impressed and edified by the devotion and sincerity with which Muslims prayed and conducted their lives. They put Christians to shame, he wrote. But when he came to write his *Disputatio contra Saracenos et Alchoranum*, he simply repeated the old myths recounted by Ramon Marti years earlier. The Christian image of Islam had an authority that easily overcame any objective contact with real Muslims".<sup>122</sup>

It was by now a "tradition" to accept as gospel every ludicrous tale about Islam from the "authorities" of the past, and occasionally add new ones. Therefore anyone who believed in such a religion had to be utterly stupid or had to be duped by some extraordinary witchcraft. The next step was to make up fictitious stories about such witchcraft. "The Christian scholars were at a loss to understand how Mohammed had managed to inspire such a loyal following in the Arab [sic] world, and so they presented him as an imposter or fraudulent magician, who concocted false 'miracles' that took in the simple-minded Arabs. Thus there was a [concocted] story about the Koran miraculously appearing between the horns of an ox or a cow, straight from heaven. Again, Mohammed was said to have trained a dove to sit on his shoulder and pick peas from his ear. ...It was by now implicitly believed



to be absolute truth that Mohammed had set himself up as a prophet in order to conquer the world and that most of his closest friends and followers had *known* that he was an imposter but had kept quiet about it because of their own base ambition...the Arabian peninsula was seen as a region in the outskirts of the Christian world of Europe and the haunt of Christian schismatics and heretics...from the third to the fifth centuries the orthodox Church had been involved in a series of bitter political and theological disputes with the Arians, the Monophysites, and the Nestorians, and when scholars encountered Islam, *whose teachings about Jesus, for example, was not dissimilar to that of a heretic like [Bishop] Arius, they assumed that it was the last of these heresies.* They called it after its founder, just as they had in the case of Arianism [Christianity as taught by Bishop Arius], and ignored the name [Islam] that Mohammed and Muslims used" says Armstrong.<sup>123</sup>

Even as hate for Muslims and "Mohammedanism" was growing and was soon to lead to yet another Crusade, there was a new development in European hatred towards the Jews. "In 1243 near Berlin, the Jews were for the first time accused of stealing the Eucharist [Christian sacrament bread and wine] from churches and tearing the wafer to shreds. At once this became another standard charge against the Jews, which came up with the same regularity as the charges [which had prevailed over years against the Jews] of child murder and cannibalism...In 1240 he [Pope Gregory] condemned the Talmud [Jewish holy book]...on the first Sunday of Lent, he sent a letter to all the kings of Europe, telling them to seize the copies of the Talmud...the King of France [Louis IX] sprang to the task zealously. He ordered a certain Nicholas Donin, who was a convert from Judaism and was now a fervent Franciscan, to interrogate Rabbi Jehiel...in a public debate [about] all those passages which were insulting to the Christians, even though he knew that they represented only a tiny portion of the whole...In 1242 the Talmud was condemned and the books were burned in the presence of the King [Louis]."<sup>124</sup>

## Chapter 5

# The Christian-Mongol Alliance

(1)

In neatly classifying the Crusades by numbers, and ignoring the smaller Crusades launched between the larger ones, the Crusade that was now to be undertaken by King Louis IX (St. Louis) is called in Western History books as the Seventh Crusade, and "the Last Great Crusade." In fact there had been and would be several "small" Crusades to follow. And there was to be one of the most devastating of all Crusades which was still to come, what can only be classified as the Mongol/Christian Crusade, following upon the first Mongol invasion killing literally millions of Muslim masses, destroying dozens of cities and obliterating entire civilizations for ever in Muslim lands. In his later years, Chenghiz Khan said that he enjoyed the killing but also the total destruction of all he conquered. In sheer numbers alone, the massacre of the Muslim populations is the worst in recorded history.

At the end of the twelfth century, the Persian Empire was ruled by Khwarism Shah. His kingdom's eastern boundary extended up to the western boundary of the Oxus, the Kara Khitai from the Oxus to the Altai. The northern half of China was ruled by the Tatar Emperors of Peking. The tribes, later called the Mongols were warriors, engaged incessantly in savage and brutal tribal wars in which poison, treachery, torture and rape were freely employed. Yissugei, a Mongol leader who had distinguished himself in wars with the Tartars, died in 1175, leaving a young son called Temujin. Runciman (in *History of the Crusades*) reports that he helped Torgul Khan (titled Wang Khan or Ong Khan) of neighboring Kerait tribe; this Ong Khan was known and glorified in the West as Johannes (or Prester John), because he was rumored to be a Christian, but he was, according to Runciman, "a bloodthirsty and treacherous man, singularly lacking in Christian virtues."<sup>1</sup> Yet fantasy tales of great valor and virtue were made up about Ong Khan later in Christian Europe. He now quarreled with Temujin in 1203, and in the ensuing battle, Ong Khan (Prester John) was killed and Temujin now took over the Kerait lands as well, says Runciman; in 1206 Temujin was acclaimed leader of all the

Mongols with the title of Chengiz Khan or the Mighty Lord. He was now the acknowledged leader of all tribes extending to the Great Wall, and his people were collectively called the Mongols. Chengiz Khan united the Mongols from 1207 to 1209 in a campaign of plunder of the states south of the Gobi desert. In 1211, he invaded the Kin Empire of China, conquered Liauyang and Korea and in 1215 captured Peking, the capital of the Kin Empire. Then he set out for Persia to commence what would be the most gruesome single holocaust in recorded history.

At this stage, "Muslim civilization led the world, Europe barely emerging from the Dark Ages, had as yet little to offer. The fragile border between Chengiz Khan and the Khwarizm Shah marked the boundary between the world of Islam and that of the steppe nomads," writes Lieut-General Sir John Glubb (*The Lost Centuries, from the Muslim Empires to the Renaissance of Europe*<sup>2</sup> Hodder & Stoughton, London 1967).\*

Now Chengiz Khan decided upon his most ambitious invasion, that of the Muslim lands, the most advanced civilization of the time. "Muhammad, the Khwarizm Shah, when informed that a Mongol caravan was approaching the outskirts of his domain (Otrar on the Jaxartes) merely asked that it be kept under observation, assuming that these nomads would wish to poach on some land for grazing their animals" writes Glubb. Through most of 1219 Chengiz Khan did just that: fatten his horses. Then in February 1220 along with his sons, he entered Bokhara, in the northern reaches of the Persian Empire. The city, as a center of learning and not a military base, offered little resistance; nevertheless it "was surrounded and exterminated to a man." Next day he entered the great mosque of Bokhara, and "a drunken orgy ensued...Qorans were pulled...and trampled under foot...soon the drunken savages were staggering round the mosque...women were then dragged in and a general debauch ensued...meanwhile the civil population had been ordered to assemble outside the walls...[they were distributed as slaves] to various Mongol units. Most of the women were raped...the city was then set on fire. Tens of thousands of people were massacred and their bodies left unburied. Bokhara had been a great and ancient city...the golden age of Bokhara had been from 900 to 999, during which period it had been the center of a brilliant effervescence of Muslim civilization. Its streets had been crowded with poets,

Explaining why he titled his book "The Lost Centuries", Sir John Glubb writes "Religious hostility against Islam was still intense [during the Renaissance]...a liberal education necessitated a knowledge of Latin and, if possible Greek and a fair acquaintance with Roman history from the republic to the first twelve Caesars. Thereafter historical teaching ceased and was resumed in England at least, at the Norman Conquest in 1066. An interval of eight hundred years was passed over in silence or dismissed in one contemptuous sentence such as 'the centuries of barbarian Oriental invasion'. Roman civilization was said to have been reborn at the Renaissance and to have grown into modern Western democracy, no debt to Arab or Muslim culture being admitted...eight centuries have been omitted from our curricula." Of course these eight hundred years have not been "omitted" entirely, just replaced with stopgap distortions of history.

historians, doctors and scientists, while its libraries, museums and colleges almost rivalled those of Baghdad itself. Ibn Sina, known in Europe as Avenicna, had worked in the royal library. Firdausi, one of the greatest of Persian poets, composed his early works in Bokhara. Here also Al Razi wrote his great book on medicine, destined to be used for centuries as a textbook in Europe. All this great cultural heritage, the accumulated intellectual wealth of centuries, was obliterated in plunder, rape, bloodshed and arson... Leaving the smoking ruins of Bokhara, the Mongols marched up the lovely valley of the Zarafshan, filled with gardens, orchards, fields and country villas, driving before them gangs of young men whom they had taken as slaves. Samarqand in 1220 was one of the richest commercial cities in the world...the city was surrounded and the inhabitants had been marshaled outside the walls. A number of skilled craftsmen were separated and sent off to work in Mongolia. In exchange for a ransom of 200,000 gold pieces, a part of the inhabitants were allowed to return to the city. The remainder appear to have been killed," says Glubb.<sup>3</sup> All that survived from this great learning were the few works, which had been moved elsewhere.

Most Western historians clearly face a challenge in writing about this most gruesome, nauseating chapter in human history. The ugliness of Chengiz Khan could not be totally hidden. But some excuse had to be found to show the Muslims brought it upon themselves, otherwise there would be overwhelming sympathy for the Muslims. On the most flimsiest Mongol "legends" Western writers and later filmmakers evolved a myth to justify Chengiz Khan's animal brutality. Why did Chengiz Khan do what he did? The Western version claims, (and is repeated ad nauseam by many) that the Khwarizm ruler treated Changis Khan's "ambassador" with contempt; he was sent to establish cordial relations, and had him killed! Western views have to do a tricky balancing act from this point on, because despite forceful wooing by the Pope and his agents, most Mongols had accepted his gifts but rejected his overtures. And then they were to become Muslims! Their Islam was to be their own peculiar type, at times spiritual, cultural, at times as barbaric in warfare as that of Chengiz Khan. Popes continued to try and woo the non-Muslim Mongols - only some of these secret Vatican overtures to create a Christian Mongol alliance, were to become known, as we shall see.

Sir John Glubb is British, spent years in research and in writing histories of Muslim lands. He researched the Mongol onslaught and reports it in detail. And it is important to note some of what he writes. The Persian forces were fully capable of resisting this Mongol onslaught, according to Glubb, but Khwarizm Shah was not the strong military leader they needed. He panicked at the sheer brutality of the invaders and fled when he heard of the fall of Samarqand. Chengiz Khan sent two of his commanders with forces to capture him. As they advanced they captured, killed and destroyed each town on the way. The Shah fled to Kazvin (Kasmin) and then to Astara by the Caspian Sea, where he fell ill and died.

His son Jalal ud-Din Mangubirdi took the title of Shah but reports of the inhuman barbarity of the invaders apparently frightened him as well, so with a personal protective force of 300 he too fled and "took refuge in Ghazna." The



Mongols continued their siege of Urgun, and finally it fell. "The Mongols slashed and battered the lives out of the helpless prisoners. The city was then looted and the banks of the Oxus were cut so that its waters flowed over the ruins. In the process the river changed its course, eventually discharging into the Caspian whereas it formally fell into the Aral Sea," writes Glubb.

"Khuwarizm had long been wealthy and civilized. Urgun lay on an important route from Samaqand to Astrakhan and then to eastern Europe... the country had been famous for its theologians, professors and scientists. Here logarithms was said to have been invented, the word a corruption of the name Khwarizmi. Now city and countryside were alike reduced to an uninhabited desert...meanwhile [Chengiz Khan's] fourth son Tului laid waste Khurasan, then one of the most civilized countries in the world. On 25th February, 1221, Tului reached Merv, the capital of the province. There was no resistance and the inhabitants passively obeyed the order to assemble on the plain outside the city, where all were butchered. According to Ibn al Athir, seven hundred thousand corpses were counted" says Glubb.<sup>4</sup>

Runciman in *The History of the Crusades* also provides some other examples of the Mongol onslaught in Muslim lands. He provides similar details of Chengiz Khan's devastation of the Persian Empire. In 1220 he had already taken Rey, near Tehran; next he took Qum, killing all inhabitants. In Bokhara, in Samarkand, he slaughtered everything in sight. In Bamia "not a single creature was left alive in it... he [Chengiz Khan] killed the entire population." And so it went, town after town, though Runciman tries to find excuses. In 1221, Chengiz advanced through Afghanistan, against Emperor Jalal ad-Din, defeated him; Jalal escaped to seek refuge with the King of Delhi, but his children fell into the victor's hands and were massacred." The Afghan city of Herat "was captured in June 1222, its entire population, amounting to hundreds of thousands, was put to death. The slaughter lasted a week."<sup>5</sup>

Glubb is less forgiving of Chengiz than Runciman. "Tului [Chengiz Khan's fourth son] took Nisapur in April 1221. According to the historian Mirkhond, one million seven hundred and forty-seven thousand people were killed in this city, famous for its colleges, libraries and scholars. To ensure that nothing of the city survived, even the cats and dogs were killed...In the spring of 1221, while Tului was ruining Khurasan, Chengiz Khan advanced on the ancient and wealthy city of Balkh... the unresisting inhabitants were massacred and the city was left a heap of smoking rubble... To record the long list of sieges and massacres in 1221 would be wearisome. At every town the same procedure was followed... the Mongols 'artillery' was always more powerful and they had learned siege warfare in China. In some cases they brought Chinese sappers and 'gunners' with them... Moving south from Balkh, Chengiz Khan and his sons Jagatai and Ogatai laid siege to Bamian in the Hindu Kush... the inhabitants were killed as a matter of routine." <sup>6</sup>

Now Muslim leaders realized that this barbaric onslaught had to be resisted in battle. "Jalal al Deen soon had an army in Gazna and confronted Chengiz Khan at Pervan, and actually won the battle, the first Persian victory over the Mongols.

But soon he too was on the defensive and retreated through the Khyber Pass, reaching the banks of the Indus...on 24th November 1221, Jalal al Deen decided to cross the next day." There was a battle, which the Mongols eventually won and Jalal al Deen "swam the mighty Indus beneath the eyes of the Mongols".<sup>7</sup>

"The dynasty of Ghor had overthrown the Ghaznavids and had made itself master of northern India. In 1206, however, Muhammad Ghori had been assassinated leaving no sons, the Mamluk commanders of his army had seized power and the Ghorid dynasty had ceased to exist. A former slave, Qutb al Deen Aibek, had ruled for four years but, in 1211, he had died while playing polo at Lahore. Ilutmish, a Turkish slave, was chosen to succeed him. When Jalal al Deen swam the Indus in November 1221, Ilutmish had already been ten years Sultan of Delhi." Chengiz Khan sent "two columns to pursue Jalal al Deen but, failing to locate him, they plundered Multan and Lahore and returned through the Khyber Pass to Ghazna...Chengiz Khan returned to Khurasan...he utterly destroyed Ghazna, killing all inhabitants... contemporary historians allege that when Herat was ultimately taken [by Chengiz Khan] on 14th June 1222, one million six hundred thousand people were massacred." <sup>8</sup> The following winter [1223/4] he decided to return to Mongolia. "Considering that these men [the prisoners] would not be needed in Mongolia, he caused several tens of thousands of them to be butchered, an operation which was completed in twenty-four hours." reports Glubb<sup>9</sup>

In the meanwhile his two commanders and their forces took Kazvin in 1221; it was defended "until forty thousand Muslims had been killed ... in February 1221 they [Mongols] carried massacre and devastation through the Christian Kingdom of Georgia. Returning to Adharbajan[Azharbajan], they took Meragha, all the inhabitants being killed...they marched to Hamadan, which they destroyed, killing everyone. In October 1221, for the second time, they raided Georgia. Wherever they went they assembled all the women, raped them and then cut their throats. Then passing through the pass of Derbend they emerged into what is now southern Russia but was then the home of the Qipchaq Turks... In the thirteenth century, Russia was divided into a number of principalities, under the suzerainty of Grand Duke Jaroslav of Novgorod...no sooner did they surrender then all were killed...In the autumn of 1223, Cheba and Souboutai [the commanders] marched northwards and destroyed the wealthy city of Bulgar... 'In the Muslim countries devastated by Chengiz Khan' wrote the Persian historian[al Jauwaini] not one in a thousand of the inhabitants survived"<sup>10</sup> Glubb writes<sup>11</sup>. "There was also an element of sadism in the Mongols...Some of their victims, bound hand and foot, were used as targets for their archery. Some were cut in half, some were suffocated by having earth pushed down their throats, some were trampled to death by horses..."<sup>11</sup>

Chengiz Khan is reported to have been asked what his greatest pleasure was. He said "the greatest pleasure in life is to defeat your enemies, to chase them before you, to rob them of their wealth, to see those dear to them bathed in tears, to ride their horses and to clasp to your breast their wives and daughters" ... In his old age, Chengiz Khan seems to have been worried by doubts and fears. He questioned Muslim and Christian doctors on their faiths and asked them to intercede with God

on his behalf. He summoned Chang Chun, a Taoist hermit, from China to Persia to tell him of the secret of life. His doubts seem never to have been set at rest, for he died without professing any religion." Says Glubb<sup>12</sup>

Chengiz Khan died in 1227, with his conquests "extending from Korea to Persia and from the Indian Ocean to the frozen plains of Siberia" (Runciman). He had named his third son Ogodai his heir. "The Khan himself was a Shamanist. His sons were married to Christian princesses."<sup>13</sup> *We do know from historians like Runciman that the pope had sought an alliance with Chengiz Khan. But details are sketchy as to whether this contact began before, during or after Chengiz Khan first set out to exterminate Muslims.* Certainly his sudden and mad holocaust against the Muslim people and targeting their centers of learning suggests something more than the usual barbarism, especially in view of what developed later. We do know that it was this "Christian" connection (even though these "princesses" were Nestorian Christians), which the popes in Rome hoped to exploit when they sent emissaries, after Chengiz Khan's death, seeking an alliance with the Mongols.

Runciman is one of the few honest historians to report that there had been communication between Chengiz Khan himself and the Pope. He says the Christian world felt "it might well be that he would serve as an ally of Christendom"<sup>14</sup>, especially when Chengiz Khan's letter of June 20, 1221 apparently in response to one from the Pope "talks of forces coming from the Far East to rescue the Holy Land."<sup>15</sup>

## (2)

In carefully chosen words, Runciman also provides more facts about the mysterious links already discernable between the Mongol invaders, the Armenian (Christian) King Hathoum and the Church in Rome. No Western historians actually tells us why he would be writing to the Pope with this assurance, if he had not been invited to do so. Runciman however does report, as we shall see, the subsequent liaison between the Catholic Church and the marauding Mongols.

This was at the time Pope Gregory IX asked Christian leaders to mobilize for a Crusade. Emperor Frederick was busy conquering Papal states in Italy himself but the kings of Germany, France and England were ready to mobilize. Christendom felt the Mongols could be made their friends, and these mass killers and rapists could be projected to Christian masses as saviors! "The legend of Prester John spread an almost apocalyptic belief that salvation was coming from the East... No one paused to reflect that if Wang-Khan the Kerait had really been the mysterious Johannes, his destroyer was unlikely to fulfill the same role. Everyone preferred to remember that the Mongols had fought against the Moslems and that Christian princesses had married into the Imperial [Mongol] family," says Runciman. What did it matter if these Mongols had killed and raped millions, destroyed entire civilizations? These were merely Muslims they killed and raped. Christendom was eager to use them to crush all Muslims out of existence. "Having so mighty an ally [as the Mongols] made the moment seem ripe for a new crusade and a willing crusader was at hand."<sup>16</sup>

This was Louis IX, King of France. But Louis took three years to set sail and went to Cyprus in 1248. Of all the reasons offered by historians for this delay, the most likely is *not* so identified. But we know now, that Pope Innocent IV had most likely sent two ambassadors to the Mongols in 1245, (three years before Louis sailed) to war upon the Muslims again. His first entourage, "led by Franciscan John of Piandel Carpine, left Lyon that April...reached the Imperial camp, [the Mongol Court in the Far East]. Guyuk, now the Great Khan, received the Papal envoy kindly." But the pope's emissary was in for a shock. Because the Great Khan then wrote a reply asking the Pope to acknowledge him (Guyuk) as his overlord and "to come with all his princes of the West to do him homage," reports Runciman.<sup>17</sup> The disappointed ambassador returned with his retinue. The pope decided that perhaps he might have better luck with one of the Mongol generals in the field. He sent Dominican Ascelin of Lombardy as ambassador this time to Tabriz in Persia, to meet with the Mongol general Baichu. Baichu was apparently willing to come to a secret agreement with the Pope and his Crusaders, but he sent two envoys of his own to first evaluate the Pope. They stayed a year as the Pope's guests, says Runciman, but there are no reports of their discussions, but we know the Pope and King Louis now sought to influence the Mongol generals in the Middle East through the King of Armenia, hoping this would win more than serfdom which the Great Khan had offered them!

In the meanwhile, Jalal ud-Din, now the Khwarismian Shah, had managed to assemble a force and summon the courage to return to Persia and face the Mongol hordes. He even managed to reconquer the Persian plateau, Azerbaijan and Baghdad; significantly, Queen Russudan, the sister of George IV of the Christian province of Georgia ("an unmarried but not a virgin queen" says Runciman<sup>18</sup>) sent an army now against Jalal ud-Din but he managed to defeat this army too. The Mongols however returned with reinforcements from the Far East, reconquered much of Persia (from Khorasan to Azerbaijan). Jalal ud-Din died; the Mongols went on to take Georgia, clearly in partnership with Georgian Queen Russudan who "was allowed to live in splendor in the Mongol court" (ibid) and in 1243 the Mongols announced that *Queen Russudan's son would become King of all Georgia under Mongol protection* (ibid). Georgia was to become the Christian stronghold in the Middle East, from now on. Could this Mongol partiality for Russudan have been as a result of contacts with the representatives of the Pope and King Louis?

Western historians are naturally loth to give prominence to this liaison. Runciman does say the Mongol generals suggested that presents be sent again to the Royal Court. So, from Cyprus, Louis sent "a mission of Dominicans [priests].... they carried with them a portable chapel...on arrival they found Guyuk [the Great Khan] had died and his widow Oghul Qiamish was acting as Regent. She was gracious to the mission, but regarded the King's gifts as the tribute from a vassal [King Louis] to a sovereign [herself]." Louis' ambassadors returned "with a patronizing letter in which the Regent [Oghul Qiamish] thanked her vassal [King Louis] for his attentions, and requested that similar gifts should be sent every year." reports Runciman!<sup>19</sup>



While the Mongols invaded and took Ukraine in 1240 and Poland next, they did not proceed West. Instead they turned south to Silesia, then down to the Adriatic. In 1242 the Mongol forces heard that Great Khan Ogodai had died in distant Mongolia in December 1241. His widow took charge as leader until a successor was selected; she sought to make her son the new Great Khan, but it took five years before this was generally approved. In the meanwhile the Mongol generals in the Middle East and Near East continued their assaults, mainly on Muslim lands, presumably selecting targets at their own discretion.

In the process of this rampage, the Kwarazmian Turkish dynasty had of course been thoroughly dislodged from Central Asia. Ironically, this Mongol invasion, which Christian Europe was celebrating, was to lead to the loss of the Holy Land to the Franks. Jerusalem, gifted by Sultan al-Kamalā to Frederick during the last official Crusade, was among the territories that the *Kwarazmian Turks, driven by the Mongols from their conquered lands*, now invaded. With extreme fury and terror at the losses they had suffered at the hands of the Mongols, these Turkish forces were "fleeing westward to get as far as possible from the terrifying Mongols, destroying cities in their fury. When they arrived in Syria, 10,000 of them attacked Damascus and then rushed on to Jerusalem, occupied the city and drove out the Franks" reports Armstrong<sup>20</sup>. In the meanwhile, in Europe, French King Louis felt so ill that it was feared he was dead, but he survived, says Armstrong. "At that moment, wrote Joinville, God intervened: 'Our Lord worked in him and soon sent him back to health'...He had been reprieved from death in order to recover Jerusalem."<sup>21</sup>

### (3)

While Western historians usually insist the two previous attempts by the Pope to win the Mongols into an Christian alliance had not been very successful, Runciman records the fact that the contact in December 1248 was most pleasing to the Christians; that was when the Mongol general Alghaidai is reported to have *agreed to a partnership with Christian Europe*. King Louis was delighted. "The scruples that forbade him to come to terms with any Moslem did not apply to the pagan Mongols" says Runciman<sup>22</sup>. As we have seen, Louis sent costly gifts and "a portable chapel" to Alghaidai, who promptly suggested that these be sent to the Great Khan in Mongolia. As we have seen, Guyuk had died in the meanwhile, however, and his widow the acting Regent, received the gifts and sent a letter with the Christian envoys (it took them almost three weary years to return) in which "the Regent thanked her vassal for his attentions, and requested that similar gifts should be sent every year"<sup>23</sup>. It is unclear whether the Mongol queen meant her vassals King Louis and the Pope must come *personally* annually to pay homage, as her diseased husband had demanded.

One Western chronicler of the time, Crusader Jean de Joinville, was a close friend and admirer of King Louis, so of course he is entirely silent on the Mongol connection. In fact, de Joinville's *The Life of King Louis* is dedicated to King Louis. What is very interesting is that *Muslim chroniclers of that era apparently*

*knew about the liaison between Christendom and the Mongols, and report on it as a matter of course*. But it is significant that some Western "orientalists" of later centuries not only ignore the Christian-Mongol liaison and downplay the devastation upon Muslim culture from the horrors inflicted by the Mongols, but even suggest that this holocaust was good for Muslims! In *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan* (Stanford University Press, 1969), Vartan Gregorian argues that "the Mogul invasions may have had positive as well as negative effects on the historical development of Central Asia, Iran and Afghanistan." In other words, this historian feels Muslim "may have" gained from having millions killed and raped!

Some Western historians concentrate on the *benefits* of Mongol practices as teachers of modern warfare: "Chingis's campaigns have been critically studied by modern military planners. *Hitler may have owed something to him*" writes Prof. J.J.Saunders<sup>24</sup>. In a curious turn of poetic justice, Western historians, in glamorizing Mongol brutality towards the Muslims, may have encouraged Hitler to follow suit with his atrocities, which they now piously condemn of course.

### (4)

The crisis with Emperor Frederick had led in June 1245 to the Pope himself being banished from Rome and Italy; the Pope had complained to King Louis, but the latter had been indecisive about any action against Frederick; Pope Gregory IX also found that support for his own return to Rome was not as strong throughout Europe as to even arouse indignation at Frederick's action. Louis suggested a Crusade would be the best way to bring Louis himself again into the limelight, as one who could unite Europe behind the Cross.

As we have seen, all the overtures to the Mongols by the popes and now Louis had been disappointing. These contacts with the Mongol queen had not worked out as the Pope had wished and when Guyat had become The Great Khan, his response to the overtures of the paper delegates was the same – he cordially invited the Pope, as his servant, to come and pay homage. But the Pope continued to establish an alliance with the Mongol generals who were rampaging in Muslim lands; finally, in December 1248, the Pope was pleased because his delegation under Dominican Ascelion to these Mongol generals did succeed in creating an alliance, reports Runciman.<sup>25</sup>

Louis' fellow-Crusaders, waiting for Louis in Cyprus<sup>26</sup> had by now amassed a very powerful army, fully equipped and ready to launch the "Seventh Crusade." It had been decided that the wealth of Egypt was the first possession they wanted, even before trying for the Holy Land. For this purpose, ships with the best equipment were essential and that took more time. "The Venetians disapproved of the whole Crusade and would not help" says Runciman. Others like the Genoese and the Pisans were too busy fighting each other. Nevertheless by May 1249, the Crusaders had a fleet of one hundred and twenty large vessels. But suddenly a storm hit the armies as they embarked, destroying many of the ships and drowning many of the forces. Louis sailed with only a quarter of his manpower, though it was still a very formidable force.

Egypt was in a state of chaos as the Crusaders well knew. The Sultan was dying, his son and heir Turanshah was away in Gezira and a palace revolution was brewing. Also there were serious dissensions among the Muslims, especially between the Ayubites and the Mameluks, between the prince of Aleppo and his cousin, and so on. Initially therefore the Crusaders' invasion met with success; they captured Damietta and put the Muslim population who could not flee to the sword or into the fires they lit. The Crusaders treated the Muslims with unrelenting fierceness but they treated the Coptic Christian population "with scrupulous justice" and "once again, as in 1219, the Great Mosque became a cathedral and a bishop was installed." There were reports that Egyptian forces had aided the Kwarazmian Turks to appease them, in their conquest of Jerusalem. The dying Sultan now offered Louis his help in getting Jerusalem for the Christians if the Crusaders withdrew from Egypt. *Louis refused* (ibid).

The Sultan died three days later. His astute wife Sultana Shajar ad-Durr "acted swiftly and efficiently and kept his death a secret. By the time the news leaked out...Turansha [her son] was already on his way back to Egypt. Louis still hoped a government led by a woman and an old man would shortly collapse and began to plan his offensive." writes Runciman.<sup>27</sup> Western historians, reporting battles invariably glorify Christian victories and have sad and excuses for defeats. Suffice it to say that eventually, in attempting to capture Mansourah, the Christians lost as many lives as the Muslims. Then the Muslims attacked. The Christians had hoped that there would be a revolution in Egypt as a result of the factions and rivalries. Instead the Muslims regrouped and advanced under Turanshah, proclaiming him the Sultan when the death of his father Ayub became known. Knowing that he had died heartbroken after the initial Christian victories and massacres, differences were forgotten in a bid to rally behind Tuanshah.

The Christians suffered the loss of a great many ships. Huge numbers of Christians were taken prisoners and, this time, it is reported that, as King Richard had done in the previous Crusade, many were executed because the Egyptians found "it impossible to guard them all." Under the terms of surrender, the Egyptians first demanded not only the return of Damietta and a ransom for the release of the many remaining prisoners, but also the lands in the Middle East under the Franks. When they were told, however, that these lands belonged to King Conrad of Jerusalem, "the Muslims at once dropped the suggestion", because Conrad's father, Emperor Frederick was considered a friend by the Egyptians. "The prestige of the infidel Emperor [Frederick] did much to ease the situation for the Crusaders" (Runciman).<sup>28</sup> But the terms of the surrender were humiliating for King Louis who had undertaken this Crusade convinced that God wanted him to destroy and conquer Muslim lands

(5)

When news of the disastrous Seventh Crusade reached the masses in Europe, there were fiery denunciations of the Pope. "In earlier days, the misadventures of the Crusaders could be explained as due punishment for their crimes and their vices,

but so facile a theory was now no longer tenable. Was it possible that the whole movement was frowned upon by God?" To add to the discomfiture of the fanatical Crusaders was the fact that during this Crusade, when illness had struck so many of them, some of the Muslims had gone out of their way to aid the sick. "To Joinville [the chronicler], the Muslims seem to have become human beings. He recalled the kindness of an old Muslim soldier who used to carry one of the six Crusaders to the latrines every day on his back" reports Armstrong.<sup>29</sup> The Crusaders were pleased when the Mamluke Turks of the Palace guards now assassinated Sultan Turanshah but their hopes were dashed when the Mamlukes now demanded ransom for themselves before they would release the Crusaders. The ransom was paid and the defeated Crusaders returned to Europe.

Louis himself remained in the Middle East. He was desperate to find a way to turn defeat into a kind of victory and he felt he knew how. He now made overtures to what Western historians dubbed the "Assassins" (a word was not synonymous with "murderers" as it is today; but coined because they reportedly smoked hashish). This was a segment of the Ismaili extremists perennially in conflict with the Muslim rulers in the Middle East. *Louis signed a defense treaty with the Assassins*, and Yves the Breton, sent to arrange a treaty "was fascinated by the library kept by the sect at Masyad" says Runciman.<sup>30</sup> Louis was of course still yearning for a committed treaty with the Mongols against the Muslims. But he had to keep his liaison with the Mongols and Assassins secret as they hated one another, with the Assassins regarding the Mongols as "their fiercest enemy" (ibid). But soon the usual intrigues and wars within Europe demanded attention of kings and popes, and Louis could no longer delay his return to Europe.

Before leaving he had also signed a peace treaty of ten years with Damascus and Egypt. They were both very willing for peace with the unpredictable Christians, so they could concentrate on defense against yet another onslaught by the Mongols. Apparently, the leaders of Damascus and Egypt were ignorant of the fact that "Louis main diplomatic ambition was to secure the friendship of ... the Mongols".

"After his return [to Europe] from the Holy Land in 1254 Louis led a devout life of penance...the failure of his Crusade, he was convinced, could only be explained by God's wishing to teach him humility, a characteristically simplified explanation of a disastrous campaign which had cost thousands of Christian lives" says Armstrong. It might be added, thousands of Muslims were also killed in this Crusading invasion.

But now "there was great rejoicing in the Crusader states."<sup>31</sup> The Mongols had marched back to the Muslim lands, under Hulegu, Chengiz Khan's grandson, with a huge army. Why did he return now for yet another massacre of the Muslims as part of a plan with the Crusaders? On February 10, 1258 Caliph al-Mustasi'un decided to surrender to avoid another holocaust. But a holocaust followed all the same. "Palaces, colleges and mosques were plundered and burnt. The cultural accumulation of four centuries perished in the flames; and the appalling figure of 800,000 is the lowest estimate given of the number of men, women, and children slaughtered in the streets and houses. The Christians gathered in a church under



their patriarch, alone were spared. [Caliph] Mustasi'un and his sons were taken to a village outside Baghdad and were killed in cold blood," writes J.J. Saunders (*A History of Medieval Islam*). The next Mongol assault was on Syria. "Aleppo resisted and was stormed; Damascus gave in without a fight, three Christian leaders (the Mongol convert Kibogha, the King of Armenia and the Frankish Count Bohemund of Antioch) riding through the streets and forcing Muslims to bow to the cross" says J. J. Saunders. Armstrong is less specific about the Crusaders' involvement: "The city was sacked and the population exterminated. It seemed as though Louis's hopes were to be realized and that the Mongols really would destroy Islam...In January 1260 Aleppo was destroyed, Damascus was taken and occupied and in March the Mongols swept into Palestine and took Nablus and Gaza."<sup>32</sup>

The Mongols now demanded the surrender of Egypt. But the new Mamluke ruler, Sultan Saif ad-Din Qutuz decided that the only chance of survival was to attack the Mongols. Now, once again, the Muslim forces finally realized that they all faced extermination unless they ended their differences and faced the common enemy as a combined force. In July 1260 the Muslim forces led by Qutuz attacked Mongol-controlled Palestine. According to Saunders, the Turks played a major role in this final confrontation. And the Muslim forces under Sultan Qutuz thoroughly defeated the Christian-Mongol forces in the battle at Ain-Julat near Nazereth on September 3 1260. The victory marks "the end of Mongol supremacy... It was an ironic reversal of Louis's hopes."

Having defeated the common enemies, there was yet another internal revolt among the Mamlukes, and this time Baibars (who had fought against the Mongols) assassinated Qutuz and became the new Sultan. But Baibars was particularly furious with the Franks for their double-cross. "Baibars could not forgive the Franks at Antioch for colluding with the Mongols and in 1265 when Helegu died, he took advantage of Mongol quarrels to invade their territory in Palestine and establish a new base there. He next advanced on Antioch and reportedly "reduced that ancient city to ruins...the trauma of recent years had produced a new ruthlessness and desperate determination to survive [among these Muslims]."<sup>33</sup>

## (6)

Now there was evidence of deeper Crusader-Mongol alliance. King Louis had set out with a huge army for yet another Crusade, even though he had signed a "peace treaty" for ten years with the Muslims. The Muslims were perplexed, not because Louis broke his vow (they were becoming used to the Crusaders breaking treaties) but why Louis and his Crusaders were first headed for Tunisia. Clearly, they were aiming to conquer Muslim lands there before proceeding to Egypt and the Middle East, which lay devastated from the Mongol massacres.

"The Sultan Abu Abdullah Mohammed al-Muntansir bi-ilah, ruler of Tunisia, prepared to meet this Christian attack and offered 8000 dinar for peace...the Christians took the money the Sultan offered them but did not make peace and started their Crusade...the Muslims were almost defeated, when God suddenly

seemed to step in and liberate them, and the Mamlukes and the Tunisians could breathe again. Louis's army succumbed to the plague that was rife in Tunisia and on August 25, 1270, King Louis himself died," reports Armstrong.<sup>34</sup>

"Certainly Western Christians at once acclaimed Louis as a martyr." But it was the Tunisians who exhibited nobility of character now by their respect for Louis who had come to kill them. "The local people [Tunisians] were charitable enough to erect a small shrine in Louis's memory, for they could see that, even though he hated them to his last breath, he was a genuinely religious man." The Christian Crusaders, on the other hand, "having declared him a martyr were not keen to be contaminated by his flesh. Because the Crusaders were afraid that the body would decompose, they boiled the flesh off the bones" then placed the bones in a casket for burial in Europe.<sup>35</sup>

By now the Christian kingdom in the Middle East was just Acre and the County of Tripolis. When Baibars died and Sultan Qalawun took over, he could very easily have taken these Christian possession, but "seemed to go out of his way to befriend the Franks...[even though at least] Tripolis stood aloof and still preferred to side with the Mongols, who were themselves trying to make a comeback during these years. Mongol Great Khan Hukugu's grandson Il-Khan Arkhun approached the Pope and the rulers of Europe in 1287 with a new offer of alliance and proposed a joint offensive against the [Muslim] Mamlukes in January 1291."

<sup>36</sup> When Mamluke Qalawun heard of this alliance, he furiously attacked Tripolis [the Mongol's ally] and massacred the inhabitants." Yet even though many of his officers urged Qalawun to attack Acre, the Sultan refused to dishonor the truce. "<sup>37</sup> In fact he urged Muslims to continue friendly trade and relations with Acre. Unknown to him, "there was an aggressive party of [Christian] religious chauvinists in Acre in 1289 as there had been in the Kingdom of Jerusalem a hundred years earlier and they urged King Henry to ask the Pope for another Crusade."<sup>38</sup> This new Crusading force arrived from Italy in 1290.

The Crusaders were feted to an alcoholic banquet when they arrived in Acre. "They then rushed drunkenly through the streets of the city, attacking merchants from Damascus and any man who wore a beard, which meant that some Christians were killed. Qalawun was appalled by this fresh assault, yet he was still unwilling to destroy the city and offered to make a new treaty. But Acre had been overtaken by a crusading madness and refused to make peace, so Qalawun, driven beyond further endurance, swore on the Koran that he would not lay down until he had thrown the Franks into the sea."<sup>39</sup>

The Muslim army was assembled in Cairo and it left for Acre November 4, 1290, led by Qalawun. He died on the way, however, and it was his son al-Ashraf Khalil who then led the army. They battled the Crusaders at Acre until June when they broke through and this time the Muslims punished Christians brutally.

Most Western historians claim that this was the last major Crusade. Exactly what is a "crusade"? Each time, through the centuries, when mainstream Christian Europe felt the need to war upon any group, large or small, and elected to do so in the name of Christianity, it became a "crusade." Of course "crusades" against

Muslims were Europe's chief preoccupation, but "heretic" Christians were periodically killed through "crusades" from the time the Arian Christianity had been systematically crushed, just as the recent Catharists had been. The Inquisition was the most recent, ongoing fanatical Crusade within Europe. Like most fascist movements, it began at a small scale. "In 1229, when he was only fifteen, Louis [King Louis IX] organized the first Inquisition to eliminate the heresy of Catharism in the south of France. Louis instructed the Dominicans [priestly order], who had originally been created to preach peacefully to the heretics, to prosecute them instead by inquisitorial methods [torture]. The Inquisition continued to operate in the south [of France] until 1247 when Louis and his army massacred the last remaining Catharists in cold blood at Montsegur. But once Catharism had been wiped out, there were many other heresies to extinguish and the Inquisition...was eventually used to persecute Muslims and Jews."<sup>40</sup>

Over future years, those Crusading passions could be whipped up and stirred into action by Protestants as by Catholics. Sometimes individual rulers seeking larger kingdoms called for them. Colonial powers, using their sharpening Machiavellian skills for conquests, were to tap passions of fanaticism whenever they felt it was politically expedient to do so even *without calling them Crusades*. And while reformed Churches of the future were to be less crude and more humane in many ways, they were at least *implicitly* not averse to this "spread of Christianity" which colonialism allowed. Image-making, the lethal powers of visual media of the future, would do the rest.

"The great crusading adventure was over" writes Armstrong.<sup>41</sup> The last Crusader was Pope Pius II in 1464" she says.<sup>42</sup> In *The Cross and The Crescent*, Malcolm Billings says "Fifty years ago, crusading, which began with the preaching of the First Crusade in 1095, was said to have come to an end in 1396 or, at the latest, in 1444. Thirty years ago, Sir Stephen Runciman ended his three-volume history of the Crusades in 1464. Now there is one study, which ends in 1560 and another which concludes in 1571. This book is not the only one to be published this year which takes the terminal date forward to 1798."<sup>43</sup> So the date of the "last crusade" keeps getting moved nearer *but never too close to contemporary times*. The fact is that with a deeper understanding of the motives which have led to conflicts between the Judeo-Christian world and the Muslim world, they did *not* begin in 1095; they did not end in 1464, or 1571 or even in 1798. The fact is the Crusades against Muslims began in the 7th century AD and *they have never ended*.

## Chapter 6

## Europe: The Crusades

### PART II

## The Crusaders at Home





would not understand today. Violence ruled at all levels. Murder of close relatives to gain fortunes and power was common. When Pope Urban II called for a Crusade in 1095, only one of King William's sons, Robert, decided to go. He borrowed a large sum from his brother, now King William Rufus, and proceeded to the Middle East. In 1100, King William Rufus was out hunting with his other brother Henry "when an arrow, shot on one knows by whom"<sup>72</sup> killed him. So Henry (Henry I) became king and ruthlessly claimed ownership of older brother Robert's Normandy possessions, even placed Robert (when he returned from the Crusades) in prison for life. Henry's son William died in "an accident due to some drunken orgy."<sup>74</sup> So when King Henry I died, there was once again chaos, with various claimants to the throne, tribal lords in battle. Raping and pillaging were rampant, as always. In 1149, his son Henry claimed the throne. He had married Eleanor of Aquitaine, a Plantagenet with huge possessions in France (she was the former wife of King Louis of France, whose escapades in the Middle East during the Crusades we have noted earlier). The Pope supported Henry as the King of England; other claimants suddenly died, paving the way for the ascension of Henry II.

Culturally, France was far more advanced than England. French influence permeated all of the upper classes of England, as well; they used French as their mother tongue and they yearned for French refinement. The French judicial system was instituted in England, using judges "in eyre" (traveling) or in "assizes" (from the French for sitting). The jury system came from Southern Europe. Originally, England and France had a "legal" system *not* based upon facts but upon what came to be called Trial by Ordeal or *Lex Terrae*, a "very ancient tradition...This ordeal was either in the form of ordeal by battle (a duel) or of hot iron or water (the suspected person having to hold a hot iron or put his hand into boiling water) and was used to decide a doubt. *To be defeated in ordeal by battle or to remain unhealed after a specific time after the ordeal by hot iron or water was held to be proof of guilt.*"<sup>77</sup> Of course Trial by Ordeal was a procedure for the nobles. For the ordinary people, their guilt or innocence was instantly ruled by their superiors. There was also to be another form of test of guilt or innocence practiced especially against religious offenders. They were dumped face down in water. If they survived, they were *guilty*, because it meant they were helped by the devil. If they suffocated under water they were innocent and now with God.

### (3)

From the start, most of those seeking temporal power treated religion as merely an instrument towards that objective. Thomas Beckett, the Archbishop of Canterbury, had followed the Pope's lead and supported King Henry II but was murdered in his Cathedral at Henry's orders. Henry was married to Eleanor of Aquitaine and when she left him too, Henry and his ministers feared that the vast possessions that she owned in France would be lost to England. It led to England's Hundred Years War against France in pursuit of Eleanor's Normandy lands. Henry told Pope Alexander III that he would not only do penance for Beckett's murder but "that he would

regard him [the Pope] as the feudal overlord"<sup>78</sup>. This pleased Pope Alexander III that he threatened to excommunicate Eleanor for leaving Henry. So a happy Henry proceeded with more battles, seeking to conquer Scotland and Ireland. Then, in 1183 AD, Henry II fought a battle against his son Geoffrey, and Geoffrey was killed. So Henry's second son Richard was now heir to the throne. In 1189 Richard joined King Philip Augustus of France and marched in battle *against his own father*. They defeated Henry, and Richard took the throne as Richard I.

This Richard was to be idolized through the ages especially by the 20<sup>th</sup> century media as Richard the Lionheart, a symbol of courage, valor, goodness and great acumen in the battlefield. The truth was different. "He was always in bad health, often actually unable to walk or to ride, given to eruptions of the skin. During his [military] campaigns he had frequently to be carried in a litter" says Belloc<sup>10</sup>. But he did love wars and spent only a few months in England in his entire life, the rest in battles overseas. Richard *spoke no English, only French*, but British "histories", songs and later movies and TV were to immortalize him as the ultimate, valiant "English" hero.

The Pope saw Richard's lust for battle as very useful. He called another Crusade, appointing Richard, along with King Philip Augustus of France as co-leaders. And, as we have seen, despite Saladin's many concessions to Richard, he failed. But some British historians put their own spin on it of course. "The Third Crusade failed. Jerusalem was not recovered, and the treacherous, cruel, but courageous Saladin remained...master of the Holy Places" is how Belloc sees it!<sup>11</sup>

As soon as they returned from the Third Crusade, King Richard and King Henry VI of Germany were promptly at war *against* each other. Richard was defeated, captured, held to a huge ransom, which almost totally bankrupted the English treasury. Then, in yet another battle, "while he was besieging a castle in the Limoges district" (ibid) Richard was killed. By this time King Henry VI of Germany was *preparing to lead the next Crusade*.

No one at the time would have dreamt that England's "Robin Hood" myth and that of Richard "the Lionheart", while popular as fables, would become one of the most popular "historical" legends in future years. In these legends, Richard's younger brother John would become the classic villain, at least in part because he criticized the Church, fought the aristocracy, and *once even publicly stated he wished he could become a Muslim!* Richard, who fought wars against his own father, against Philip, his co-leader of the Third Crusade, who bankrupted the English treasury when he was kidnapped in battle against Germany, spoke no English but became the glorious English "Lion-heart".

King John inherited a financial crisis with the throne. There were the huge amounts demanded by the Pope especially before and after each Crusade. There was also the huge debt created by Richard from his Crusade and the ransom that had been demanded for his release after he was kidnapped by Philip Augustus of France.

To these huge debts, John is said to have added his own. Then he had to seek additional taxes from the nobles. This led to the Rebellion of the Rich against the



taxes. On June 15, 1215, they forced King John to sign the Great Charter (Magna Carta). "Centuries later...the importance of this document was vastly exaggerated and a myth which completely misrepresented its character...to this day ill-instructed people talk of it as though it were in some way the basis of the much later aristocratic Constitution of England" reports Belloc<sup>15</sup>. It was no "democratic" document at all. It was written in Latin with concessions to the nobles that John was forced to sign. He almost immediately tried to overturn the provisions by force, the nobles in turn invited Prince Louis (son of Philip Augustus of France) to invade and make England part of France. Louis came, won victories so swiftly that he reached London on June 2, 1216. But the plan worked only partially. During the battles, John died, but the Plantagenet line remained under Henry III. The nobles agreed to the taxes provided the king gave them special favors. This was to be the first crude form of parliamentary representation in England. Contrary to persistent British and US claims in future years, the idea of Parliament did not originate in England. Even British historian Belloc admits this: "Parliaments, the councils in which representatives from the mass of freeholders met the clergy and the nobles in order to discuss exceptional grants of aid to the monarch, had risen long before in the Pyrenees; indeed, they had appeared for nearly two centuries in those southern districts. The idea of the thing came late to England"<sup>12</sup>. The idea of Parliament grew from Islam's concept of "Shura" used for many years in Spain. "Representation, as we know it [today] was an idea novel to England, though it was familiar in the South of France" writes Belloc (p.154).

England's yearning for the rich Normandy lands of Eleanor took many forms... England sought these lands in alliance with the powerful Emperor Frederick II, who was constantly in dispute with the Pope, but was still very powerful. In 1242, Henry III marched in battle against France, but lost; the adventure lost Henry more possessions, the rich nobles demanded less taxes, Simon de Monfort (who led a "Crusade" against non-Catholic Christians in France as demanded by the Pope) fought the Barons' War which lasted, on and off, for seven years. The nobles sought to replace the king with rule of the nobles but the Pope sided with the King. Battles for supremacy within England was so intense that Simon de Monfort at one point even took the King prisoner.

#### (4)

Edward I returned from the Crusades to invade Wales and conquer it, put Welsh leaders to death. Next he turned to conquer Scotland, fought battles, claimed the right to the Scottish throne through the Bruce, while the Scots claimed they were descended from Scotia, the Egyptian queen. Intrigue and battles followed. The wars between Europe's rulers caused the Pope anxiety that so much wealth and military power was being used up among Europeans against each other. By this time, Pope Boniface VIII had forbidden the clergy in England and France to pay any taxes to the king. "Edward replied by outlawing the clergy which meant they could not expect the protection of the civil power which they affected to despise;

to kill a clergyman ceased to be an offence in the eyes of the law," reports Davies<sup>15</sup>. The King of France banned the export of gold and silver from his country, metals in which the Pope's contributions were made. The Pope hurriedly withdrew his edict. But now he took two swords before him at public functions, to signify his right to spiritual and temporal power.

The pope's enormous monetary demands had caused some monarchs of Christendom to become rebellious; the open defiance by Frederick (the friend of the Muslims) against popes over the years was an example which caused other rulers to lose much of their timidity. Now the French King decided to show how courageous he was. He had the Pope arrested and brought to Avignon, in France, and insisted that the Pope live there, not Rome. For seventy years thereafter, Popes ruled from Avignon, fights between rulers and the Church even caused there to be not just one but two different popes simultaneously, one in Avignon, another in Rome.

In England now, extreme financial crisis led to the expulsion of the Jews. Because Jesus had not just banned usury (charging excessive interest on loans), but done it so dramatically, chasing the moneylenders out of the temple, Christianity had, until this point at least, sought to avoid being accused of indulging in usury. England had found a hypocritical but simple solution: Why not let the Jews do the money-lending? "Usury was forbidden by the laws of the Church, so that money-lending, which is necessary to all commercial industrial ventures of any magnitude was left to the Jews from whom Christian conduct was not expected," says Headmaster H. A. Davies<sup>16</sup>. The Jews "had...been the only financiers in Britain...They were the 'King's Jews'...Jewish historians have justly boasted that the early castles and ecclesiastical buildings of the twelfth and thirteenth century 'were built with Jewish money'...a small body of Jews, less than a score [out] of thousand families, confined to fixed areas in certain towns, were the great financial agency...what undermined their position was the attempt to enrich themselves yet further by using the opportunity of the Crusades"<sup>17</sup>.

With the grim financial crisis facing England at this point, "the antagonism [towards the moneylenders] in England being especially violent", Edward decided that "The Jews could no longer be protected as moneylenders, though they were allowed to enter any trade they chose... But the freedom thus granted was of little use." The Jews were attacked by the populace, many killed and in 1290 they were exiled from England.

The English hunger for those French possessions of Eleanor's was still as fierce as ever. It also hungered for Scotland. But the Scottish nobles insisted on Scotland's own monarchy, using their friendship with France as insurance over the next two hundred and fifty years. So Edward dreamt even more daring dreams, seeking the throne of France. At the death of France's Charles IV, there were no male heirs, so by the convoluted "blood" rules prevailing, the Queen of Navarre was the heir to the throne. But France did not permit females to rule. So Edward III claimed the French throne through the bloodline of his mother, the daughter of Philip IV. The fact that he had imprisoned that mother for thirty years until she

died, apparently meant nothing. To Edward, blood provided Divine Rights. It started the Hundred Years War with France.

Alongside the Hundred Years War there was the devastation of Europe by the Black Plague. Filthy living conditions prevailed among the rich and poor, personal hygiene was unknown, so the epidemic raged beyond control. No proper records exist but from the fragmentary ones that do, state that as many as two-thirds of the population in several parts of Europe died from it. In Oxford, England, two out of three persons are reported by Belloc to have died from it.

One important result of the Black Plague was that the English language gained popularity and development. French tutors were hard to find during the epidemic for even the wealthy classes, so gradually Old English, which by now used to be the good deal of French in it, grew in popularity. *And gradually this use of English was to create a sense of nationhood even among many of the offspring of the French-speaking English nobles in future generations. Many saw England, not France as the home country. The Hundred Years War was no longer a revolt against the home country.*

The War did not of course run all through those hundred years, but consisted of a series of battles throughout that time. At one point Edward won victories but after the battle at Crecy, which the English won, mainly due to the Welsh long bow which came as a complete surprise to the French, he and his son, Edward, the Black Prince, separately conducted raids and looted.<sup>730</sup> The Black Prince was especially ruthless. "He led a great raid in that autumn [1355], burning towns and villages everywhere east of the frontiers of Gascony, while his father, back in Britain, was leading a somewhat similar raid into Scotland, France's ally...The Black Prince himself was, of course nothing but a French-speaking knight" (ibid) and he enabled him to conduct surprise looting raids with in France. At Poitiers, the English forces captured King John of France. They held him to ransom. In 1359, he signed away all the lands claimed by Edward III.

France by now had a regular Parliament, with independent powers, and it refused to recognize the terms signed by their King John to obtained his own release. So Edward invaded Paris in 1360. While he was beaten back, the exhausted French, with their King still held captive by the English, agreed in 1360 to ratify John's capitulation.

However there was a catch. The document said the English King could hold the Plantagenet fiefs "as the king of France had held them." The French King had held these lands in his capacity as *Duke of Aquitaine, or Normandy, not King of France*. Therefore, Edward's rights would also be in that capacity. *But if Edward were, to claim those lands, he would have to do so as Duke of Normandy, and owe allegiance to the King of France.*

The ransom demanded by England for the release of France's King John had not been paid in full. So the English kept him in custody until he died in 1364. The new King of France, Charles V, insisted that the Black Prince should pay homage to him, as the Duke of Aquitaine. The Black Prince responded with "a dreadful massacre in the town of Limoges".<sup>731</sup>

## (6)

In the midst of this unending carnage, England's vast peasantry, starving poor, finally rose in rebellion, led by a Wat Tyler. Abject poverty, the Black Plague that was killing Europeans by the millions, and now the new tax now imposed on them was the last straw. The Peasants' Revolt took the Government by complete surprise. The rebels even entered Lancaster Palace, looted it, set it on fire with gunpowder, that new military weapon learned by Europe from the Chinese. However "The anarchy was quelled by a trick"<sup>732</sup>. The young king was sent to meet the rebels and promised to grant all their demands. Once they were soothed down, their leader Tyler was seized and killed.

France too was in a "civil war" between two rival claimants to the French throne. The current King Charles VI was thought to suffer from "intermittent lunacy"<sup>734</sup>. Two rival claimants, the Duke of Burgundy and the Duke of Orleans were at war, seeking the throne. In 1405, Burgundy managed to kidnap Orleans and his son and killed the father. But Orleans had another son, and the Orleans faction marched on Paris in 1411 to capture King Charles IV themselves, but the Burgundy faction got there ahead of them. Henry IV of England saw this as an opportunity for himself. He offered an army to the Burgundians as additional force, in return for which he wanted their recognition of the old Plantagenet claim to south-eastern France. Then Henry IV died.

His son Henry V was ready to follow up and take full advantage of that civil war in France. He immediately sought to marry Katherine, the daughter of "mad King Charles" of France. Then he put together a large army; "his plan was to make a raid [on French border towns] such as his great-grandfather had carried out, gathering what loot he might and falling back on Calais [which the English still held]. When his forces eventually met the French forces at Azincourt [Agincourt in English] the English were victorious, massacring the French soldiers, even the prisoners."<sup>735</sup> The victory at Agincourt gave, to start with, "a great deal of loot by ransom from the wealthier of those [French] who had fallen prisoners"<sup>736</sup>.

The civil war in France continued for three years. Burgundy captured Paris in 1418. The Orleans force (who fought for the Dauphin, as "rightful heir") set up a rival government at Poitiers. In the other "civil war" between the two popes, the Council of Constance had been called to end the "two-pope" confusion. Seeking to gain more power for their king, the English priests supported Emperor Sigismund's candidate; the French Armagnac priests (who supported the Dauphin) supported the other. At one point, in fact, there were *three popes*!

Gaunt was in France, the dissident nobles who had supported him now gathered around the Duke of Gloucester as their choice. Murder of friends and supporters on all sides followed, including that of the Chief Justice, but despite a year of chaos, Edward III's son Richard survived. King Richard, now thirty years old, married an *eight-year-old* princess Isabella of the house of Valois. More intrigues followed. Richard himself set out to complete his conquest of Ireland. It was always dangerous for any European ruler to leave his kingdom, *so he took Henry*



of Lancaster's little boy as hostage to Ireland. The troops which the nobles were to provide for his invasion in fact never came; Richard found himself hostage; he was taken secretly back to the Tower in London and is said to have been killed there. In the meanwhile, the Duke of Lancaster appeared in Parliament with a parchment signed by Richard II (still presumably alive but imprisoned in the Tower) to say he had resigned the throne. So on October 13, 1399, Lancaster was crowned Henry IV. A dead body was exposed four years later in St. Paul's Cathedral, said to be that of Richard II. Richard's young Queen Isabella was by now old enough and in fact pregnant when he died. She gave birth to a child shortly after his death.

As a precaution against being overthrown, Henry IV had a few opponents killed. He had even a clergyman, Scrope, Archbishop of York "murdered without trial"<sup>23</sup>. By this time, there were two "infallible" Popes in Christendom: one Pope had moved to Rome and another was still in Avignon as ordered by the King of France. This tussle between the two popes helped Henry. Pope Innocent VII (of Avignon) ordered all those connected with the murder of Scrope excommunicated. But Pope Gregory XII (of Rome) won Henry's heart and support by declaring the excommunication null and void!

There now emerged a seventeen-year-old peasant girl Joan of Arc, who claimed to hear heavenly voices that urged her to go and support the Dauphin win his rightful throne. After much skepticism, the Dauphin's court agreed to let her lead a force against the English armies. Her forces managed to break the stranglehold that Henry IV's forces had on supplies into Orleans. Joan led an army and the Dauphin through the hostile towns of Rheims and had him crowned King Charles VII on July 17, 1429.

She said her mission was now complete. But the Dauphin's forces insisted that she continue. The reluctant Joan had to continue. She was defeated, captured at Compiègne. The northern priests including those at the University of Paris "helped the [English] Plantagenet power to capture her. She was tried, condemned to death as a heretic and a witch, and burned alive at Rouen on May 30, 1431"<sup>24</sup>.

### (7)

The War of the Roses was nearing an end *because the aristocratic leadership on both sides was being slaughtered until few remained*. The Queen now gathered a force of Lancastrians to attack Edward's father, the Duke of York at his castle. York along with all his supporters in the castle was killed. Violence and revenge followed among the nobles on all sides. For instance "Salisbury, the head of the Nevilles, was beheaded; young Rytland was stabbed to death by Lord Clifford himself, to whom he had surrendered; and York's head, with a crown of gold paper set on in mockery, was put up on a pike over one of the gates of York" writes Belloc.

The Queen had turned for help to the household servants for "comfort". One of her favorites servants was a certain Owen Tudor or Tyddr, believed to be of Welsh origin. He had been a servant in the household of the current Queen's

father-in-law, Henry V, as a steward or a groom. After Henry V's death, however, Owen Tudor "had been the paramour of...Henry V's widow...the children born of it [the affair] had been brought up with their half-brother Henry VI".<sup>29</sup>

Edward, the son and now the new Duke of York, and heir to the throne (by agreement with Henry VI), fought in the Battle of Mortimer's Cross in 1461 against Owen Tudor, defeated the Queen's forces, took Owen Tudor prisoner and later killed him. But Owen's son, Jasper escaped. The victorious Edward was able to march into London with popular support and was crowned Edward IV at Westminster. Then Edward battled the Lancastrian forces with his own army, emerged victorious, "fifty of the chief men on the Lancastrian side being killed in cold blood after the battle"<sup>30</sup>.

Edward IV became enamored of a widow five years his senior, named Elizabeth Grey (also called Woodville); he married her secretly. The true reason why this soured some relationships are not clear but this marriage along with other intrigues between those around him, led to more killings; his younger brother Clarence claimed Edward was illegitimate and sought the throne for himself; Edward's closest ally Warwick, turned against him, even seeking to restore Henry VI's son to the throne if he agreed to marry Warwick's daughter. Warwick came with a large force from mainland Europe with the former Queen, wife of Henry VI, who was alive but imprisoned in the Tower. Edward forced the release of Henry VI from the Tower, and *crowned him King again*.

More battles followed. Then Henry VI was grabbed and imprisoned again in the Tower of London. Warwick heard of this, marched to London to confront Edward on Easter Sunday April 14. "We have nothing but confused and contradictory accounts of the battle" says Belloc<sup>31</sup>. It ended in a huge massacre; Edward won, Warwick was captured and killed.

Henry VI's wife, the Queen, marched again with the remaining Lancastrian forces. At the Battle of Tewkesbury town the Queen's forces were routed; she was captured, the remaining Lancastrian leaders were "either killed or murdered [after the battle]. The last male Beaufort, the Duke of Somerset, was among those murdered, and the young heir to Henry VI was killed in the abbey itself, perhaps in the presence of Edward"<sup>32</sup>. The Queen was held to ransom until her brother, King Louis XI of France paid the ransom money.

"The War of the Roses" had ended. A new dynasty, the Tudors, most illustrious of all English dynasties, was soon to emerge from the loins of a servant.

### (8)

Edward IV was now King without dispute. Just to make sure, he had his brother (his recent ally) Clarence killed, and then his reign of another twelve years is reported, in English history books, with praise, though he led a life of debauchery and died aged 41 in 1483, leaving two sons. Edward, aged 13, now became Edward V.

The Lancastrian party, the other line with claims to the throne, had no heirs left, after Edward had massacred just about all its nobles. For them, however,

presumably "The War of the Roses" was not ended. They searched and eventually decided that Henry Tudor might be their best candidate. This Henry Tudor was the son of Edmund Tudor, and grandson of the groom Owen Tudor whose affair with the widowed Queen of Henry V had produced Edmund Tudor among other bastard children. Edmund Tudor had been given titles along the way by the grateful Queen Margaret and her husband Henry VI for his loyal support against Edward IV. So his son, Henry Tudor, now Earl of Richmond, was seen by the Lancastrians, despite his servile background, now titled and respectable enough to be king.

Henry Tudor was thrilled. He waited in mainland Europe for the right opportunity. It came when Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, Edward V's uncle, who was appointed Protector of Edward V during his minority, first announced that the young King would be crowned soon, then decided to take the crown himself, Richard said that his brother Edward IV had never really married Elizabeth Grey/Woodville, so Edward V was in fact a bastard, therefore he himself was the only legitimate heir. He seized Westminster Abbey on June 26, 1483. He had promised Edward V would be crowned, and on July 6 Richard himself was crowned Richard III. "His two boy nephews, Edward V and his little brother Richard, were imprisoned in the Tower [of London]. Whether they were murdered or not ... will never be known...Two hundred years later the skeletons of two lads of about such an age were found under a staircase in the Tower"<sup>33</sup>.

It was pure routine in England by now to have murder and mayhem during each struggle for the throne of England. The public only heard vague rumors and had no powers anyway. But Richard III had now gone too far with barbarism. Now there was considerable resentment among the nobles at his methods and Henry Tudor made his first attempt in 1484 to overthrow the new king. It failed and he returned to France. Richard now sought to reinforce his claim by trying to marry his niece Elizabeth (whose brothers he had consigned to the Tower and probably already ordered killed). And he appointed the Earl of Lincoln his heir if he died without an issue. This was seen as a poor choice, because Lincoln's name was John de la Pole; "it would have been strange substitution to find a de la Pole on the throne of England"<sup>34</sup>. There was bitterness in England against France after the humiliation of the Hundred Years War.

In 1485 Henry Tudor tried again. His forces were smaller than those of Richard and mainly foreign. So Richard artfully kidnapped Stanley's son Lord Strange; then he "ordered young Lord Strange to be put to death"(ibid).

The two armies met at Bosworth on August 22, 1485. Henry's forces were victorious. Richard III had led his forces wearing a crown. Henry picked it off Richard's head as he fell. The bastard grandson of a court groom was now King Henry VII of England. The reign of the House of Tudors had commenced.

## (9)

Henry VII quickly sought to establish royal legitimacy by marrying Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward IV. And he set up the Court of Star Chamber, which was a

court answerable to him alone, so that rebels against his authority could be dealt with swiftly at his command. As King, he automatically assumed Divine Rights. With Spain on the verge of ousting all of the Muslims and becoming a powerful Christian nation under Ferdinand and Isabella, with the Pope's support, he arranged a marriage between his first born Arthur and their daughter Catherine, both still children.

Claims were made by others to the English throne as usual, but now one claimant drew considerable attention in France and Scotland as well. It was the younger of the two boys whom Richard III had imprisoned in the Tower and who were believed to be dead. But this boy claimed he had escaped. Even Emperor Maximilian believed he was genuine. Eventually this young man claiming to be the Duke of York and heir to the throne, met Henry in battle, lost, was captured, put into the Tower, soon "hanged, drawn and quartered...In the next week poor young Warwick was similarly half-strangled, disemboweled and quartered"<sup>35</sup>.

The young Catherine of Aragon (Spain) arrived in 1501 and was married to England's Prince Arthur on November 15. But on April 4, 1502, the boy Prince Arthur died. Henry VII's own Queen (Arthur's mother) died the following year. There was a very large dowry which came with Catherine. Henry felt he should marry his seventeen-year-old widowed daughter-in-law himself, but was told it would be scandalous. Hating to lose that fortune which Catherine would take back, Henry now married her in 1503 to his second son Henry.

It was a marriage that would change the course of English history.

## (10)

Henry VII consolidated his control over Scotland and Ireland through other marriages. He married his daughter Margaret to the King of Scotland. Even though most of the Irish still spoke a Celtic tongue, Henry consolidated his support there as well, so that he would remain "Lord of Ireland." Seeking a foothold in the New World's enormous riches, he paid for part of the 1497 adventure of Giovanni Cabotto [later anglicized to John Cabot] a Genoese who crossed the Atlantic, reached Nova Scotia, the American mainland. In 1509 Henry VII died and his son Henry VIII was king.

Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon (five years his senior) was celebrated three weeks after his father died. The first three children born to them were either stillborn or died within months. Mary, a daughter born seven years later, survived, though reportedly deformed, with a head much too large for her body. Later, the truth could no longer be hidden. *Henry VIII could copulate but he had a venereal disease, which would grow worse over the years.*

By now there was growing resentment all across Europe against the papacy, the enormous sums of money demanded by the Pope, the "Indulgences", the large salaries paid to the clergy, the fines enforced for infringements of the rules laid down by the papacy and the clerics (which they themselves broke with impunity), even the large sums (which so very many could not afford) known as mortuary



dues, compulsory payments without which the Church refused to bury any Christian. Most of all, the open life of debauchery so many of the popes and the clergy now led was now too blatant, *that prostitutes had power enough to make their own children popes, as some had.*

But while the religious revolt in much of Europe was already in full blown (even in Scotland where the laymen had seized the funds of the great monasteries), "there was no *heresy* to speak of in England," says Belloc<sup>36</sup>. In fact there had been what the Catholic Church and Belloc would call heresy much earlier also in England, a powerful movement led by the learned Wycliff. In the early fourteenth century, even before the "heresy" movement in much of Western Europe, Wycliff fiercely condemned the moral corruption of the Church and the lifestyle of its leaders. And he "taught that the bread in the Eucharist is not the body of Christ, but only its image; that the Roman Church had no true claim to headship over other churches; that its bishop [the pope] had no more authority than any other bishop; that it is right to deprive a delinquent church of temporal possession; that no bishop ought to have prisons for the punishment of those obnoxious to him; and that the Bible alone is a sufficient guide for a Christian man" says Draper<sup>37</sup>. "God bindeth not men to believe anything they do not understand," said Wycliff. And so this remarkable man not only claimed that laymen had the right to read the Bible (forbidden by the Church) but translated the Bible himself in English (an emerging language) so that the common people could be taught from it, and eventually, when literate, read it themselves (his translation was to be destroyed later, replaced by what most believe was a forgery). He advised Edward III not to pay the Pope. A grateful Edward protected him when the Pope ordered his arrest. Wycliff died in 1384. Wycliff's followers, the Lollards, however, did not survive long after him. Among his close associates had been John Huss, the Czech reformer, *who, as we have seen, had also been to Bosnia.* It was the Bosnian religious revolt that had spread across to Western Europe. Wycliff apparently died a natural death. But, according to Draper, 44 years later, "his body was excavated and his skeleton burnt in fire." H. A. Davies however claims that while the order was given by the Council of Constance, Wycliff's bones were not excavated, though John Huss was burnt at the stake as a heretic in 1415<sup>38</sup>.

That Council of Constance did resolve one problem. It selected one pope. There had been two popes now (briefly three) for over seventy years, all claiming divine appointment, and it had led to utter confusion for some, hilarity among Church critics.

Wycliff's revolt had not been allowed to leave any major imprint on England after he died. While Protestant movement were spreading all over Europe, *King Henry VIII had happily voiced his support for the Pope.* The Pope had awarded his loyal ally, Henry VIII, the title "Defender of the Faith". *It was only Henry's insistence later of wanting to marry and divorce wives at will that the Pope denied.*

In 1512 Pope Julius II, indulged in a variety of intrigues to safeguard his own huge temporal possession. He formed alliances with Ferdinand of Spain (who wanted Navarre) and Henry VIII (who wanted to revive the old Plantagenet property

claims) and they declared war on France in June 1512; at the same time, Henry joined with the German Emperor in Flanders. The French King (Louis XII, aged fifty-seven) married Henry's younger sister Mary (aged sixteen); Henry wanted and got a better control over Scotland. James IV (Henry's own brother-in-law) crossed the border into England as an ally of France. In the battle that followed, the English defeated the Scottish force, James IV was killed. His son (now James V) was more to Henry's liking. He was an infant.

England was on its way to a successful predatory tradition beyond Henry's own dreams of avarice, but not beyond those of daughters Mary and Elizabeth.

## Chapter 7

## Bosnia's Unforgivable Rejection of Christianity

## (1)

Exactly who were the Serbs and the Croats?" asks Noel Malcolm rhetorically in *Bosnia: A Short History* (McMillan, 1994). A Slav scholar, this feature writer at Britain's conservative *Daily Telegraph* who courageously criticized his government's policy in Bosnia also delved into Slav origins. For instance: "Scholars have long been aware that the name 'Croat' (*Hrvat* in Serbo-Croat) is not a Slav word. It is thought to be the same as an Iran name *Choroates*... the root of the name 'Serb', *serv*, became *charv* in Iranian. Most scholars tell us Serbs and Croats "were Slavic tribes with Iranian ruling class, or that they were originally Iranian tribes which had acquired Slavic subjects... But the historical truth is fairly clear: the Serbs and the Croats were, from the earliest times, distinct but closely related... and both having some kind of Iranian component."<sup>1</sup>

Serious historians and scholars have studied the origins of the Slavs and the "heresy" of Bosnia for many years before the holocaust of the 1990s. The Slavs are believed to have been the descendants of the Goths, Asiatic Huns, Avars with the Iranian Alans forming the elite component. "The Sarmatians [Iranian tribe] ruled over the other tribes, and it seems likely that some of the Slav tribes acquired an Iranian-speaking ruling elite" writes Noel Malcolm "Another theory proposes that the root of the name 'Serb', *serv*, became *charv* in Iranian... what is clear is that the Serbs and the Croats had a similar and connected history from the earliest times"<sup>2</sup> he adds. The influence and dominance of Iranian tribes is of course understandable. After all, Persia was then and for centuries to come, an advanced super power of the world.

The precise nature of "heretical" Christianity most Bosnians followed, according to Malcolm, was not Bogomile. For our purposes, it is only necessary

to note that the Bosnians practiced a Gnostic form of Christianity, that they prayed a lot and believed deeply in Goodness. In *Croatia: Land, People, Culture*, edited by Prof. Francis Eterovitch and Prof. Christopher Spalatin (University of Toronto, 1970) we are told that others in the region were looking for a new religion. "Manichaeism was an heretical religious movement that combined Christian concepts with the old Iranian dualism. From the Bogomiles in Bulgaria the religion spread through Albania and across the Adriatic to Italy and France, where the adherents were called Pataranes and Albigenses respectively. Dominik Mandic believes that it appeared in Dalmatia and Bosnia in the eleventh century. Soon the ruler, the court, and the majority of the aristocracy and of the people accepted this creed."<sup>3</sup>

The origins of the Croats, the Serbs and the "Muslims" were also discussed — much before the present horrors — in Prof. Spalatin and Prof. Eterovich's *Croatia: Land, People, Culture*, (three volumes, Toronto University Press, 1970) we are told that *the Serbs are the least Slavic of all*. "Most of the Serbs living in Bosnia and Hercegovina today have a strikingly dark complexion, inherited from the Balkan Vlachs of the Middle Ages. All historians agree that the Vlachs were not ethnically Slavic... Historians disagree, however, on how they came into possession of their dark brownish complexions or, rather, on which black or semi-black race these Vlachs descended from... Most of the present-day Serbs in Bosnia and Hercegovina descend from the medieval, non-Slavic Vlachs... By the end of the eighteenth century, and at the beginning of the nineteenth, in the religious communities of the Orthodox faith in Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Travnik, Znojnik, Foca, Mostar and elsewhere a considerable proportion of the membership was composed of Bulgarians and other non-Slavic ethnic groups. These *foreigners*, living and associating with the native Croats of the Muslim, Catholic and Orthodox faiths, learned the native tongue. By the middle of the nineteenth century, all of them, owing particularly to the activity of the Serbian Orthodox Church, began to consider themselves Serbs."<sup>4</sup>

Ancient Iran (Persia) at the time was the world superpower. Prof. Ivo Banac in his 1984 book *The National Question in Yugoslavia: origins, history, politics* (Cornell University, 1984) considers the Bosnians to have been, like the Croats, of Persian antecedents, and in fact the purest blood; he reports that his researches also show that the Serbs are a mixture of many things: "Bosnian Muslims were not a foreign element. They, perhaps they alone, were autochthonous to Bosnia-Hercegovina. They were pure descendants of Bosnian 'Patarins' and King Tvrtko, the purest part of Croat and Serb people. Unlike the Serbs like Pribicevic, who was a 'refugee from the mountains of Black Wallachia' their [Bosnian] blood was pure Slav."<sup>5</sup> This issue, too, is not pertinent for our purpose except to note the ultimate irony of the Serb claims of purity in an ignorant world of the 1990s, to justify their "ethnic cleansing".

The Balkans had been converted to Christianity around the ninth century, but trouble began when the Pope learned that the Bosnians, like the Bulgarians, were moving towards what was to be later considered a *gnostic* form of Christianity.



Because the Roman Church subsequently destroyed all of the Bosnian writings of the time, specific details do not exist. It was clearly a religion the Bosnians believed in and practiced so ardently that they were willing to suffer death and torture for hundreds of years to come, rather than give in to the Catholic Church in Rome and the Eastern Orthodox in Constantinople.

An important source on early Bosnian history is a remarkable treatise, written in the mid-nineteenth century, by British scholar Sir Arthur Evans. In it, he provides an outline of the history of Bosnia. Evans, a prominent intellectual of the Victorian era and evidently a Slavic scholar, wrote *Through Bosnia and the Herzegovina On Foot* (Longmans, Green & Co, London 1876) after extensive travels in that area. "Towards the end of the [eleventh] century the Bulgarian heretics, now under Byzantine rule, were hunted down by the Orthodox Emperor. The Princess Anna Comnena has left us an account of the persecution of the Bogomiles by her father Alexius...This delicately sensitive princess gloated over...the breaking out of poor human nature as the victim comes nearer to the scorching [at the fire], the turning away of his eyes, and finally the quivering of the limbs...in the twelfth century...Bosnia had become the headquarters of what we might call the great Slavonic Heresy." (xxviii).<sup>6</sup>

Sir Arthur Evans refers to the early Bosnians as Bogomile Christians, a convenient term perhaps to use for all Gnostic Christians of the time. According to Evans from 1180AD, the Pope pressured local Catholic kings and princelings in the area to do whatever might be necessary to crush these heretics. "It was in vain that...the King of Hungary appointed a Catholic Ban Zibiclave. It was in vain that in 1216 the Pope sent the sub-deacon Accocius to labour at the conversion of the heretics. The Bogomiles [Bosnians] only gained strength and their faith struck firmer roots in the neighboring countries of Croatia, Dalmatia, Istria, Carniola, and Slavonia...but Rome, in the Albigenian [Catharist] crusades, had already tasted blood and resolved to have recourse to the same weapons in Bosnia which she had employed so efficaciously in Provence [i.e., kill the lot, along with all their literature]" writes Evans (xxxvi).<sup>7</sup>

When inducement failed, brutality was used, says Evans. "Coloman, the brother of the King of Hungary...in 1238 entered Bosnia with a large army to exterminate the heretics. He extended his havoc through the whole country, and even 'purged', we are told, the principality of Chelm, which answers to the south-western part of the Herzegovina. From this period on the history of Bosnia for centuries consists of little more than a series of such bloody inroads...Cities were sacked...the firm germs of civilization are trodden under foot...[Pope] Gregory IX congratulates Coloman on 'wiping out the heresy and restoring the light of Catholic purity' but the Pope was quick in discovering that these congratulations were premature...In 1246 Pope Innocent IV had to stir up a second Bosnian crusade, the conduct of which was entrusted to the Archbishop of Colocz — 'a man skilled' as was fitting in an archbishop - 'in all the sciences of war'. He received a cross from the Pope to fix upon his heart, and aided by the King Bela of Hungary, renewed his pious work. Many heretics were butchered, other were cast in

dungeons...but once again it was discovered that fire and sword had raged in vain...But at the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Hungarians had once more gained ascendancy in Bosnia and the Pope eagerly seized the weapon of orthodoxy at his service. [Pope] John XXII directed two letters, one to Charles, King of Hungary, and the other to Stephen, Ban [ruler] of Bosnia. The letters were almost identical in scope" The letters, says Evans, dealt with the need to "exterminate the heretics" "venom", "obscene errors", "and wolves in sheep's clothing covering their bestial fury."

"In 1330 the King of Hungary and the Ban [ruler of Bosnia] combined to assist the Inquisitor Fabian; many heretics were hounded from the realm, and the usual scenes of horror were repeated. In 1337, however, heresy is again rampant as ever in Bosnia, and the Pope accordingly stirred up the neighboring princes to another Bosnian crusade" (xxxix).<sup>8</sup>

This led to more massacres, but the "heretics" clung to their beliefs. And now there was growing evidence that, in addition to the Catharist movement in France which had developed from their heretical beliefs, their resistance was also encouraging Protestant movements emerging in Europe. "In 1437 the Romish bishop Joseph complains that Bosnia was swarming with Hussites and other heretics." Evans (xl).<sup>9</sup>

Once again, a fierce Catholic force was now launched against the heretics, many more were massacred and many were "sent in chains to Rome, where it appears they were 'benignantly converted' whatever that means." quips Evans "But the expulsion of forty thousand by King Stephen Thomas did little to diminish the strength of the Bogomiles in Bosnia. In 1462, as we know from the Roman archives, heresy was as powerful as ever in Bosnia. *Already, twelve years before* [as reported in Raynaldus, *Annal. Eccles.* sub anno 1450] *the Bogomiles [of Bosnia] had invited the Turks into Bosnia as their deliverers; in 1463, on Mahomet II's invasion, the Catholic king found himself deserted by his people.* The keys of the principal fortresses, the royal city of Bobovac, were handed over to the Turk by the 'Manichaeen' governor, the other cities and towns hastened to imitate its example, and within a week, 'seventy cities defended by nature and art' passed into the hands of [Sultan] Mahomet. Bosnia, which may be described as one vast stronghold, refused to strike a blow in defence of her priestly tyrants" (xlii).<sup>10</sup>

## (2)

"Bosnia presents the unique phenomenon of a Protestant State existing within the limits of the Holy Roman Empire...Bosnia was the religious Switzerland of Medieval Europe, and the signal service she had rendered to freedom of the human intellect by her successful stand against authority can hardly be exaggerated... the history of these champions of a purer religion has been written by their enemies, and ignored by those who owe most to her heroism" says Evans (xliii).<sup>11</sup> Note that Evans refers to Bosnia as a state. And in covering the period of papal persecution of the Bosnians of the time, Noel Malcolm quotes from a document "issued by

[Pope] Gregory XI in 1372 urges the conversion of 'infidels' in Bosnia...and concludes: 'here ends the brief summary written against the errors and heretical tenets of the Kingdom of Bosnia.'<sup>12</sup> This clear proof, that Bosnia was looked upon as an independent empire six centuries ago, was to be ignored in the 1990s, by the Western Alliance.

Evans feels that the entire Protestant movement owes a great deal to the pioneering work of the Bosnians, but this debt has never been recognized. Intellectuals however "will be slow to deny that England herself and the most enlightened countries of the modern world may owe a debt, which it is hard to estimate, to the Bogomiles of Bosnia" (Evans xlii). What is remarkably civilized about Evans' view is that though a devout Christian himself, with no sympathy for the religion of Islam, he still feels, in the nineteenth century after those Bosnians had become Muslims, that their fight for freedom against Rome deserves praise and that these Muslims were the most advanced Bosnians who should rule Bosnia.

Bosnia's pioneering Protestants had begun to study Islam from the Bulgarians gradually, even before the Turkish conquest in the sixteenth century. And then the thunderbolt fell on Christendom. The Bosnians gradually became Muslims. Many of the nobility, the aristocracy of Bosnia converted and then the masses did. It is known that not just Bosnian "heretics", but Catholics converted as well, *Bosnian as well as Croats*. And this fact of conversion to Islam has bothered all Western historians and scholars right to our present times, even those who try to be fair, sympathetic to the plight of the Bosnian Muslims in their many tribulations, the many massacres they were to suffer over the centuries, even before the most recent holocaust began in 1992. Albanians converted to Islam too, but the Bosnian phenomenon was somewhat different. In Bosnia, the son of the Duke of Sava and Prince Sigismund, the heir to the Bosnian throne, converted to Islam. Sigismund's mother Queen Catherine denounced him, left Bosnia and in a letter she reportedly wrote to the Pope, tells him that Sigismund must not be allowed to rule Bosnia until he had reconverted to Catholicism (or, as she words it, rejected 'the vomit of Mohammed'). *Bosnia was different because its elite and best educated were the first to convert to Islam.*

In fairness to Queen Catherine, we should recognize the agony through which she must have lived; she was stunned at the conversion of son Prince Sigismund to Islam, as well as that of her brother the son of the Duke of Sava. But her husband King Stephen Thomas (who had used so much force to destroy the Bosnian heretics) had been killed not by the Turks or the Bosnians but (according to Evans) by his own step-brother Radivoj and his illegitimate son Stephen Tomascevic. "We do not know that King Stephen Thomas ever met the Turks at Kossovo...In 1460, while encamped on the field of Bilaj, he was assassinated by his step-brother Radivoj and his illegitimate son Stephen", reports Evans (i).<sup>13</sup>

"A large number of the Bosnian nobles and landowners did not share the prevailing Croatian allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church, but had long been members of a Manichean sect, called Bogomiles, against whom thirteenth century popes had launched crusades.... The Bosnian nobility ...embraced Islam and they have remained faithful to their commitment ever since"<sup>14</sup> *Croatia: Land People,*

*Culture*, three volumes (edited by Francis Eterovich and Christopher Spallatim, University of Toronto Press, 1964).

The conversion of much of Bosnian aristocracy was not all that made them unique. They soon began a remarkable culture of deep learning of Islam, conducting massive new researches, wrote innumerable works in Slavic, Arabic, Persian which filled hundreds of libraries, excelled in and even pioneered forms of poetry and song which became the cradle of Europe's culture. And they created eventually, whenever they had the freedom to do so, a society of tolerance of all religions, a multi-cultural society of remarkable sophistication.

None of this is denied by serious and honest scholars and historians. For instance, in their three-volume treatise *Croatia: Land, People and Culture*, Prof. Spallatim and Prof. Eterovich provide volumes of details not just on the Croats but on the Bosnian Muslims and their remarkable cultural achievements. They reveal that the advent of the Turks was *not* the first exposure Bosnians had to Islam, but that it had filtered in from the tenth century, brought there by Hungarian Muslims.

The problem that many Western historians and scholars faced, and undoubtedly face today, with this conversion to Islam, is understandable. As Christians, Jews, Agnostics or Atheists, conditioned from early childhood to the Western idea of Islam and conditioned, therefore, to believe that white Europeans could not possibly accept Islam in such large numbers, they had to look for reasons why the Bosnians did convert. It must be for reasons *other* than religion that Islam appealed to them over Christianity.

The standard claim made by the Church that those who convert to Islam are almost always forced to do so, does not merit even a serious thought by the educated who may have bothered to look at the facts of history of Muslims in the West vis-a-vis Christians and Jews. "It is fair to point out that at the outset, the Turkish authorities in subjugated Bosnia did not use force to convert the local population to Islam. Mohamed II, the Conqueror, at the plea of Father Angioeo Zvizdovic, superior of the Bosnian Franciscans, issued the famous imperial order known as *Adn-name* on May 28, 1463. In it he granted to the Franciscan Fathers and their faithful freedom to exercise their religious obligations, and protection for their lives and property. To this he added the stipulation: as long as you remain faithful and obedient to my office and order"<sup>15</sup> (*Croatia: Land, People and Culture*, Prof. Spallatim and Prof. Eterovich, University of Toronto Press, 1970). There was evidently one exception, however: the brutal, vicious institution created by Ottoman Sultan Murad I of taking young Christian boys, converting them to Islam, subjecting them to a fierce training and regimen for a special elite force, which he called the Janissaries. He refused, as did subsequent Sultans, to enlist any except Christian boys for this force, and when they came to occupy the high position they did, Western historians also report (as we shall examine) that not only did Christian parents *seek* to have their sons admitted but Muslim parents protested at this discrimination against their own boys, and did succeed in having Muslim boys later admitted to the Janissaries.



There was, and is, another reason popular among Western historians, especially in media of our times, to explain this conversion of the Bosnians, i.e., that they sought to ingratiate themselves with the Turks, or to spare themselves from the *jizya* tax levied on non-Muslims. But only a little independent thought raises serious questions about this theory. For one thing, the tax was nominal, especially for the large landowners, who became Muslims; more important, the Bosnians did not have to become so ardent in their study Islam that (if some Western historians are to be believed) many of them became, in time, even more "fanatical" than the Turks. Importantly, no serious historian denies the fact that the Bosnians commenced soon to fight for independence from the Turks. There were, when Serbia was conquered by the Turks, many Turks who ruled Serbia. In comparison there were, over the future centuries, just a stray few Turks in Bosnia, as Evans confirms.

If therefore there is any excuse to be sought for the Serbian slaughter of the Bosnians in the twentieth century (especially the slaughter in 1918-1919 and now from 1992 onwards) with the fascist claim of "ethnic cleansing", it could be that the Serbs, known by serious historians to have been mainly a peasant class, have, over the centuries, only a vague understanding of history. Knowing that there were Turkish Muslims ruling them in the Turkish era, they were to assume (or have been made to believe by exploitative writers, in and out of the Church, and their politicians) that the Bosnians, being Muslims, *must also be Turks*. In fact the deep anger all over Europe at the conversion of the Bosnians to Islam never subsided over the centuries. And this led, among other modes of hate, to labeling them contemptuously as "Turks"

Sir Arthur Evans has the honesty to admit this of his own Victorian era: "Nothing is more liable to confuse the questions at issue than to look on the Mussulman inhabitants of Bosnia and the Herzegovina as *Turks*. Conventionally, perhaps one is often obliged to do so, and I must plead guilty in this respect in the course of this work. But it must always be remembered that, with the exception of a handful of officials and a certain proportion of the soldiery, the Mahometan [*sic*] inhabitants of Bosnia and the Herzegovina are of the same race as their Christian neighbors, speak the same Serbian dialect and can trace back their title-deeds as far... The great Bosnian lords, now calling themselves Begs or Capetans, resided still in the feudal castles reared by their Christian ancestors; they kept their own escutcheons, their Slavonic family names, their rolls and patents of nobility inherited from Christian kings... [But] it would be a grievous error to suppose that influence of Islam is superficial in Bosnia, or that their religious convictions are not deep-rooted".<sup>16</sup>

It is little wonder that from the sixteenth century onwards, Bosnia was looked upon with respect by the culturally inclined European but with irritation and acute displeasure by the Church hierarchy of all denominations *outside Bosnia*. Within Bosnia-Herzegovina, the religious harmony aimed at by the Muslims of Bosnia led to a unique warmth between the communities of Muslims, Christians, Jews. European Jews in fact immigrated in growing numbers to Bosnia because they saw it as free of religious prejudice. In the process, *many Jews converted to Islam*.

It was a unique society, which the Bosnians were attempting to create, even more significant than Muslim Spain. With foresight, the Muslim world would have recognized this and offered a lot more encouragement than it was to do, because the zeal and talent with which the Bosnians were endeavoring to evolve to the core of Islam, divorced from the ethnicity of the area where Islam was born, would have served the Muslim world a great deal more than the conquests and intrigues of the Ottoman sultans. The Ottoman Sultans brought with them their Ghazni and Tartar heritage to some degree, but were also greatly influenced by their closer links with the Christian world through marriages, alliances and hostilities. They were gradually conditioned by what they saw of the values in Christian European royalty and its representatives. What is seldom realized is that the Ottoman sultans were themselves biologically as European as any European royalty. Sultans married or had, as concubines, European women, whose offspring somehow managed to garner the sultanate.

While this "Europeanizing" of the Ottoman sultans progressed, the Bosnian elite, members of the oldest and most prominent aristocracies of the area, became *Muslims*, with a devotion and commitment, even greater than that which their ancestors had displayed in their devotion to "heretical" Christianity. It was something the Church, Catholic and Protestant and their adherents, would never forget. And never forgive.

## Chapter 8

# Spain: Christian Conquests and the Inquisition

(1)

In the thirteenth century, a new institution was created to deal with those who chose Islam or Judaism or even a new form of Christianity. It was the institution of the Inquisition, which soon chose to use torture to elicit confessions of faith from "heretics", then banished or killed those who refused Catholicism.

"In 1229, when he was only fifteen, Louis [King Louis IX] organized the first Inquisition to eliminate the heresy of Catharism in the south of France...Louis instructed the Dominicans [priestly order], who had originally been created to preach peacefully to the heretics, to prosecute them instead by inquisitorial methods [which soon included gruesome methods of torture]. The Inquisition continued to operate in the south [of France] until 1247 when Louis and his army massacred the last remaining Catharists in cold blood at Montsegur. But once Catharism had been wiped out, there were many other heresies to extinguish and the Inquisition...was eventually used to persecute Muslims and Jews."<sup>1</sup> The most brutal example of religious fanaticism was to begin in Spain about a century later and gradually reach fever pitch until it had literally obliterated all Muslims and Jews from that country.

This devastating holocaust is one that Western historians generally deal with in one of two ways: They refer to Jewish suffering in detail and ignore the Muslim suffering entirely. Or, (those such as Headmaster H.A. Davies), they make only a passing reference to the Inquisition, while highlighting Columbus' request for funding his voyage: Ferdinand and Isabella told Columbus they could not support him, he says, "until the Moors had been conquered and the whole of Spain made into a Christian State. In 1492 this was accomplished. The great Moorish stronghold of Grenada fell; Jews were expelled from the country and Columbus realized that

his opportunity had come" (italics added)<sup>2</sup>. Exactly what happened to the "Moors?" Dr. Davies does not tell us. His many students reading this version could be excused for concluding that it was those barbaric Moors and the Jews who *had* to be removed in order that civilized explorations.

If one searches hard enough, however, one does find a few Western historians who have dealt with the horrors meted out to the Muslims in Spain, once they were conquered. It is necessary to look into this, and at the dramatic decline of Christian Spain — despite the riches it grabbed from the New World — after it had crushed even the names of Muslims and Jews out of existence in Spain. It provides a classic lesson that history can teach, *if that history is faithfully recorded and understood*. Writing briefly about the death, tortures and banishment inflicted upon the Muslims, even upon the millions of Muslims who had been forcibly converted to Christianity, Cecil Roth says (in *The Spanish Inquisition*, Robert Hale Ltd., London, 1937) "The sum of the human suffering was appalling. Spain was rid at last of that section of her children who, in the ninth and tenth centuries, had raised Spanish culture to its greatest heights. The country even bears traces of that suicidal fanaticism which deprived it of some of its most skilled craftsmen, its most industrious peasantry, its potentially keenest brains."<sup>3</sup> Note that Roth is referring to Christian fanaticism.

As we have seen in reviewing the Crusades in the Middle East, Christians and Muslims tended to live in remarkable harmony after they had been exposed to each other over time. There *had* been Christian and Muslim rulers in Spain who were fanatically opposed to those of other faiths. For instance, the Berbers, recent converts to Islam who invaded Muslim Spain about 1090 were quite hostile to Christians at the start, in spite of the fact that they had invaded Spain at the invitation of Christian princelings whom Alfonso VI had treated very brutally in his conquests from Galicia to Leon to Castile. These Berbers (Almoravides) drove Alfonso back, but then "their leader Jusuf ibn Techufin overthrew feeble [Muslim] dynasties and established himself as supreme in Muslim Spain."<sup>4</sup> He was, at the start, brutal towards Muslims and Christians as well. But soon, these Berbers settled to a more friendly relationship with the Christians; "King Ali of Cordova...even entrusted to a noble of Barcelona named Reverter the command of his armies. His son Techufin followed his example and was regarded as a special friend of the Christians who aided him in his African wars" writes Dr. Henry Lea, in *A History of the Inquisition in Spain* (four vols). "Co-operation...with the Christians meets us at every step in the annals of the Spanish Saracens...indeed the facility of conversion from one faith to another [Islam and Christianity] was a marked feature of the period [ninth and tenth century] ...Religious differences, in fact, were of much less importance than political aims, and everywhere...Christian and Moslem were intermingled in the interminable civil broils of that tumultuous time. In an attempt on Grenada, in 1162, the principal captains of Ibn-Mardanich were two sons of the Count of Urgel and a grandson of Alvar Fanez, the favorite lieutenant of the Cid."<sup>5</sup>

By this time, "The ceaseless civil wars on both sides [Christian and Muslim] caused each to have constant recourse to those of hostile faith for aid or shelter,



and the relations which grew up, although transitory and shifting, became so intricate that little difference between Christian and Moor could often be recognized by statesmen. Thus mutual toleration could not fail to establish itself, to the scandal of Crusaders, who came to help the one side, and of the hoards of fresh fanatics who poured over from Africa to assist the other." writes Dr. Lea (italics added)<sup>7</sup>

"This constant mingling of Spaniard and Moor meets us at every step in Spanish history. Perhaps it would be too much to say, with Dozy [in *Recherches*], that a 'Spanish knight of the Middle Ages fought neither for his country nor for his religion; he fought, like the Cid, to get something to eat, whether under a Christian or Mussulman prince' and 'the Cid himself was rather a Mussulman than a Catholic though Philip II attempted to have him canonized' — but there can be no question that religious zeal had little to do with the Reconquest. In the adventurous career of the Cid, Christians and Moslems are seen to mingle in both contending armies, and it is for the most part impossible to detect in the struggle any interest of either race or religion.

"This had long been customary. Towards the end of the ninth century, Bermudo, brother of Alfonso III, for seven years held Astorga with the aid of the Moors, to whom he fled for refuge when finally dislodged. About 940 we find a King Abioahia, a vassal of Abderrhaman of Cordova, transferring allegiance to Ramiro II and then returning to his former lord, and some fifteen years later when Sancho I was ejected by a conspiracy, he took refuge with Abderrhaman, by whose aid he regained his kingdom, the usurper Ordonio, in turn flying to [Muslim] Cordoba, where he was hospitably received. About 990 Bermudo II gave his sister to wife to the Moorish King of Toledo, resulting in an unexpected miracle. In the terrible invasion of Almanzor, in 997, which threatened destruction of the Christians, we are told that he was accompanied by numerous exiled Christian nobles. Alfonso VI of Castile, when overcome by his brother, Sancho II, sought asylum, until the death of the latter, in Toledo — a hospitality which he subsequently repaid by conquering the city and kingdom... His contemporary, Sancho I of Aragon, was equally given to Moslem culture and habitually signed his name with Arabic characters. The co-operation of Christian and Moor continued to the last. In 1270, when Alfonso X had rendered himself unpopular by releasing Portugal from vassalage to Leon, his brother, the Infante Felipe and a number of the more powerful nobles conspired against him. Their first thought was to obtain an alliance with Abu Jusuf, King of Morocco, who had gladly promised them assistance... In 1282 Sancho IV revolted against his father and was supported by the Kings of Grenada, Portugal, Aragon and Navarre. Alfonso X in his destitution sent his crown to Abu Jusuf and asked for a loan on it as a pledge. The chivalrous Moslem at once sent him 60,000 doblas and followed this by coming with a large force of horse and foot, where Sancho entered into alliance with Grenada and a war ensued with Christians and Moors on both sides till the death of Alfonso settled the question of the succession" adds Dr. Lea<sup>8</sup>

Numerous such alliances are cited by Lea in Aragon as well. "As late as 1405, the treaty between Martin of Aragon and his son Martin of Sicily on the one

hand, and Mohomet, King of Grenada, on the other, not only guarantees free intercourse and safety to the subjects of each and open trades in all ports and towns of their respective dominions, but each party agrees, when called upon, to assist the other, except against allies... all these alliances and treaties for freedom of trade and intercourse were in direct antagonism to the decrees of the Church, which in its councils ordered priests every Sunday to denounce and excommunicate, or even liable to be reduced to slavery, all who should sell to Moors iron, weapons, timber, fittings for ships, bread, wine, animals to eat, ride or till the ground, or who should serve in their ships as pilots or in their armies in war upon Christians." says Lea in his four-volume *A History of the Inquisition of Spain* (American Scholar Publications, New York, 1966)<sup>9</sup>

"It was in vain that [Pope] Gregory XI in 1372, ordered all fautors and receivers of Saracens to be prosecuted as heretics by the Inquisition, and equally vain was the deduction drawn by Eymerich from this, that any one who lent aid or counsel or favor to the Moors was a tauter of heresy, to be punished as such by the Holy Office. In spite of the thunders of the Church the traders continued trading and the princes made offensive and defensive alliances with the infidel.

"Nor, with the illustrious example of the Cid before them, had the Christian nobles the slightest hesitation to... taking service with them [Moors]... In 1279 Alfonso Perez de Guzman, the founder of the great house of Medina Sidonia... promptly renounced his allegiance, converted all his property into money, and raised a troop with which he entered the service of Abu Jusuf of Morocco. There he remained for seven years... Henry, brother of Alfonso X, served the King of Tunis four years and amassed great wealth; Garcí Martine de Gallegos was already in the service of Abu Jusuf when Guzman went there; Gonzalo de Aguilar became a vassal of the King of Grenada and fought for him... Examples might be multiplied, but these will suffice... As Barrantes says, adventurous spirits in those days took service with the Moors as in his time they sought their fortune in the Indies.<sup>10</sup>

"With the opening of the twelfth century various causes awoke the dormant spirit [of fanaticism]. Crusading enthusiasm brought increased religious ardor and the labors of the schoolmen commenced the reconstruction of theology which was to render the Church dominant over both worlds. The intellectual and spiritual movement brought forth heresies, which by the commencement of the thirteenth century, aroused the Church to the necessity of summoning all its resources to preserve its supremacy. All this made itself felt, not only in Albigenian crusades [against the Christian Catharists] and the establishment of the Inquisition, but in increased intolerance to Jew and Saracen, in a more fiery antagonism to all who were not included in the pale of Christianity" adds Dr. Henry Lea.<sup>11</sup>

"In Spain the business of the Castilian was war. The arts of peace were left to the Jews and the conquered Moslems, known as Mudejars, who were allowed [for the present] to remain on Christian soil and to form a distinct element of the population"<sup>12</sup> Dr. Lea tells us in his treatise. Once the conquest of all Spain was complete, this permission to "remain on Christian soil" was quickly abandoned.

The Christian populace was terrified at the unending ferocity of the Christian forces as they made fresh conquests. Fearing the new invaders, they were willing to bend with the tide, switching to the Christian conquerors as their "liberators." "The condition of the common people can readily be imagined in the perpetual strife between warlike, ambitious and unprincipled [Castilian] nobles, now uniting in factions which involved the whole realm in war, and now contenting themselves with assaults upon their neighbors"

There were, at this point, four major Christian kingdoms, Castile, Aragon, Anjou and Lisbon (still a Spanish domain). Castile and Aragon were by far the most powerful. And, significantly, the territories which the Christian forces conquered, soon became the abodes of crime. Jean Antoine Llorente in *The History of the Inquisition of Spain* (Geo. B. Whittaker, London 1826) emphasizes that the passion for Christianity did not translate to moral behavior by its leading proponents.

Dr. Lea reinforces this: "As a writer of the period [Maldonado] tells us, there was neither law nor justice [in the 1470s] except that of arms... That the roads were unsafe for trade or travel was a matter of course; every petty *hidalgo* converted his stronghold into a den of robbers and what was left was swept away by bands of Free Companions. Disorder reigned supreme and all-pervading... In such chaos of lawless passion it is not to be supposed that the Church was better than the nobles who filled its high places with worthless scions of their stock, or than the lower classes of the laity who sought in its provisions for a life of idleness and license. The primate of Castile was the Archbishop of Toledo, who was likewise *ex officio* chancellor of the realm and whose revenues were variously estimated at from eighty to a hundred thousand ducats, with patronage at his disposal amounting to a hundred thousand more. The occupant of this exalted position, at the time of the accession of Isabella, was Alonso Carrillo, a turbulent prelate, delighting in war, foremost in all the civil broils of the period who, not content with the immense income of his lavished extravagant sums in alchemy. Hernando del Pulgar, in a letter of remonstrance, said to him 'The people look to you as their bishop and find in you their enemy; they groan and complain that you use your authority not for their benefit and reformation but for their destruction; not as an exemplar of kindness and peace but for corruption, scandal and disturbance.'" Dr. Lea cites as an example: "near the altar of the Franciscan church at Toledo, [there was] a magnificent tomb which Carrillo had erected to his bastard, Troilo Carrillo."<sup>13</sup> Later, he adds "In 1490, the clergy of Guipuzcoa complained that the officers of justice visited their houses to see whether they kept concubines... and carried off their women to prison, where they were forced to confess themselves concubines, to the great dishonor of the Church, whereupon the sovereigns [Ferdinand and Isabella] reprimanded the excessive zeal of the officers and ordered them in the future to interfere only when the concubines were notorious."<sup>14</sup>

In the thirteenth century, the Christian armies, stirred on by the Church, conquered one Muslim kingdom after another; the Muslim rulers after centuries of governance, had become complacent; their armies weak with disuse. The Christian took Cordoba in 1236, Seville in 1248. With each Christian conquest, the Christian

princelings and much of the Christian population quickly changed their alignment to the conquerors. Some even hailed the Christian armies and voiced their own hatred for the Muslims. By 1238 the only Muslim kingdom left was Grenada. By this time, wars between Christian principalities had also led to their reduction, and there were by now only three huge, victorious Christian kingdoms in the Peninsula—Castile, Aragon and Portugal (in 1140 Portugal had declared itself independent); in 1472, Henry IV of Castile died and his daughter Isabella inherited Castile. "Castile and Aragon were constantly at war with one another and with the Moors of Grenada, but in 1479 the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon with Isabella, the heiress of Castile, effected the union of the two provinces and when Grenada was conquered in 1492 the whole of the country had been brought under one ruler and Spain had become one nation."<sup>15</sup>

As Christian victories had progressed over the past two centuries, there are records of Inquisitory excesses periodically. Torture, beatings, death and expulsion of the non-Christians became the order of the day. Occasionally fanaticism was satisfied with forced conversion. For instance, Dr. Lea says "In 1212, when after the brilliant victory of Las Navas de Tolosa, Alfonso IX advanced to Ubeda, 70,000 [Muslim] men had collected, and they offered to become *Mudejares* [converts to Christianity] and to pay him a million of *doblas*. The terms were acceptable, and he agreed to them, but the clerical chiefs of the crusade, the two archbishops of Toledo and Arnaud of Narbonne, objected and forced him to withdraw his assent. He offered the besieged to let them depart on the payment of the sum, but they were unable to collect so large an amount on the spot, and they were put to the sword, except those reserved as slaves. In the same spirit Innocent IV, in 1248, ordered Kaime I of Aragon to allow no Saracens to reside in his recently conquered Balearic Isles except as slaves" (Lea, Vol 1, p56, 60).<sup>16</sup>

When the last Muslim empire of Grenada was conquered in 1492 by Ferdinand and Isabella, the treaty they signed promised that the Muslims of Grenada would be allowed to live and practice their religion in peace. But this promise was quickly broken. Under Charles V and Philip II, the holocaust was in full swing.

## (2)

In the exhilaration of becoming rulers of all Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella now agreed to finance Christopher Columbus in his adventure to find a western sea route to India. In the past, the Church had fiercely opposed all claims that the earth was round, had put "heretics" who made this claim to death. Galileo had, under the threat of such a death sentence, recanted and apologized to save his head. But now, Pope Alexander VI himself relented, after Columbus had convinced the rulers of Spain that "In India Columbus had hoped to establish a Christian base from which Christendom could launch a new Crusade against Islam"<sup>17</sup> The Pope still believed that Columbus and his crew would fall off the edge when they came to it, but felt it was politically expedient at this stage not to refuse his permission. Besides there was all that enormous wealth and advanced civilizations which existed not



only in the Middle East but in the Far East. Certainly Columbus and Vasco de Gama (who proceeded by the Eastern route in 1498) and their sponsors thirsted for those riches. Adventurers were now thirsting to explore the East, with renewed interest in Marco Polo's old book of his journey through Turkey, Persia, India and to the court of Kubla Khan. The "journal" Polo had dictated on his return to a professional writer was full of factual errors – he had even claimed to have participated in a war in China which, it was later found, had ended three years before he set out on his journey! In Venice, when his book came out, there had been open disbelief that Marco Polo, with his dubious reputation, had actually made the journey to China. Instead it was believed he had reached India and Iran and heard the reports about China from local travelers. But to adventurers like Columbus and Vasco de Gama, and their sponsors, the stories of enormous riches beyond the dreams of Europe was enough. *The age of European colonialism on foreign continents was about to begin.*

From early Greek times, there had been arguments about the fact that the earth was circular. The Church had fiercely opposed this belief that it felt was against the Bible. As we have seen, Greek knowledge was still condemned by the Church, especially with the extensive researches and advancement to Greek Thought that Muslim scholars had achieved. As Prof. Draper points out, the Church announced that to believe that the earth was round was contrary to the teachings of "Pentateuch, the Psalms, the Prophecies, the Gospels, the Epistles, and the writings of the fathers — St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Gregory, St. Basil, St. Ambrose. Moreover...[St. Christopher warned] even if he should depart from Spain 'the rotundity of the earth would present a kind of mountain up which it was impossible for him to sail, even with the fairest wind' and so he could never get back"<sup>18</sup> (Draper, Vol.II p.161).

There is evidence to suggest that Norsemen had visited the northern American continent much earlier; a Norseman named Biarni Heriufson (or Biarni Herju) is said to have been the first European to the Americas about 985 AD; the most famous of course being Lief Ericsson, about 15 yrs after Heriufson. *The least publicity given to early explorers is that of a Buddhist priest-traveler from China named Hui-Shen who in 5th century is reported to have lived for years in what is now Mexico.* Chinese historian Li Yen writes of him too. As proof of his travels, Hui-Shen took plants and fruits peculiar to the Mexican area back to China and presented them at the Chinese court. Even the *Reader's Digest*, in *The Mysteries of the Ancient Americas*, (fifth printing 1991) concedes (p.25) that "Hui-Shen's account is convincingly down-to-earth". However in 18th century Europe, then at the "Congress of Americanists" it was decided that Hui-Shen had reached Japan, not the Americas. In this Eurocentric mood, the claims of Carthagians that they had reached the Americas first, were dismissed instantly. But no one has ever determined how pyramids came to be there either. Columbus is recognized today as having been a very poor explorer himself, dependant greatly upon the experienced navigators aside from Pinzon, who went with him. At least some are known to have been Morischoes (converted Muslims).

Columbus wrote home how simple the Arawak Indians of Haiti were. "When you ask for something they have, they never say no. To the contrary, they offer to share with everyone." This apparently aroused irresistible greed in him as on his following trip, he laid down a rule: every Indian over age 14 had to make regular contributions of gold to him. Those that did not (says Howard Zinn, historian) "had their hands cut off and bled to death." It was this tribe he eventually slaughtered entirely; those he let live, he sent back to Spain as slaves "Let us in the name of the Holy Trinity go on sending all the slaves that can be sold" he wrote. Within two years of his arrival half the 250,000 Indians in Haiti had died according to historian Howard Zinn "through murder, mutilation or suicide." By 1515, 50,000 Indians remained. In 1650, there were none. Soon, as the slave trade in African inhabitants brought those millions to the "New World", the island was to have an entirely new population, from which the present population is descended. (*Legends, Lies and Cherished Myths of American History*, Richard Shenjman, William Morrow & Co, NY, 1988)<sup>19</sup>

Columbus left with three ships; the *Santa Maria* was wrecked on the way; after several false turns, he had finally landed in what are now called the Bahama Islands. "Columbus never knew the nature of his discovery," says Prof. Draper. "He died [in 1506] in the belief that it was actually some part of Asia" (Vol II, 163)<sup>20</sup>. "He believed Cuba to be part of the mainland of Asia; and he mistook Haiti for Zipangu, the golden land of Marco Polo" says Davies<sup>21</sup>.

The errors with regard to the new continent continued even in its naming. It was named America after Amerigo Vespucci (a later explorer) by a German map-maker who made the first accepted map of the new continent. When Columbus returned after his first voyage with the Indians he had brought as slaves and stories of unlimited wealth, gold beyond the dreams of avarice, Ferdinand and Isabella were thrilled. "Immediately on the return of Columbus, March 15, 1493, the King and Queen of Spain dispatched an ambassador to Pope Alexander VI for the purpose of ensuring their rights to the new territories on that same principle that [Pope] Martin V had already given to the King of Portugal possessions of all lands he might discover between Cape Bojador and the East Indies...The pontifical action was essentially based on the principle that pagans and infidels have no lawful property in their lands and goods, but that the children of God might rightfully take them away. The bull [the Pope's official edict] that was issued bears date May, 1493. Its principle is, that all countries under the sun are subject of right to papal disposal. It gives to Spain, in the fullness of apostolic power, all lands west and south of a line drawn from the Arctic to the Antarctic pole, one league west of the Azores...It forbids, under pain of excommunication, any one trading in that direction, threatening the indignation of Almighty God and his holy apostles Peter and Paul. It directs the barbarous nations to be subdued, and no pains to be spared for reducing the Indians to Christianity."<sup>22</sup> reports Prof. Draper. Note that the Pope's is referring here to the inhabitants of India, as it was still believed that Columbus had reached India (or what have since been called "East Indies"). Of course this Papal edict, for all times, has been quietly put away into the archives

and is never mentioned. Why? Because it would be embarrassing for the Church over future years, with better education, to recognize what it meant, and cause the Popes' infallibility to be ridiculed, because "In a few years it was discovered that the line of no variation was slowly moving to the east. It coincided with the meridian in London in 1662".<sup>23</sup> If the decree of the infallible pope were applied now, Draper reminds us, *not only would all of Asia belong to Portugal, but the British Isles, among others, must "for all times" belong to Spain, as must the American continent!*

The Church decided that native Americans found inhabiting the Americas, were not of the Family of Man, because the Bible did not mention them. According to Christian beliefs, "the divisions of the Old World, Asia, Africa, and Europe, were assigned to the three sons of Noah — Shem, Ham and Japheth; and the parentage of those continents was given to those patriarchs respectively...As long as it was supposed that the lands of Columbus were a part of Asia, there was no difficulty, but when the true position and relations of the American continent was discovered...the voice of the [Church] fathers was altogether against the possibility of their Adamic descent. St. Augustine had denied the globular form and the existence of the Antipodes [humans on the other side]...since none such are mentioned in the Scriptures."<sup>24</sup>

Brutality towards the American Indians had commenced from the start with Columbus, even when it was believed they were Asians. But now there was added justification to treat them as outside the Family of Adam and very soon the thirst for their gold was marvelously justified through such Christian belief. It was not necessary to rely upon the generosity of the American Indians; all they had could be taken, and they could be killed. Genocide commenced on a large scale. "By millions upon millions, whole races and nations were remorselessly cut off. The Bishop of Chiapa affirms that more than fifteen millions were exterminated in his time! From Mexico and Peru a civilization that might have instructed Europe was crushed out...It has been her [Spain's] evil destiny to ruin two civilizations, Oriental and Occidental, and to be ruined thereby herself. With circumstances of dreadful barbarity she expelled the Moors, who had become children of her soil by as long a residence as the Normans have had in England from William the Conqueror to our time".<sup>25</sup> Many decades later the Church did decide that America's Indians may be human after all and the Church the treated them with some compassion and converted them to Christianity.

Just six years after Columbus had blundered into the new continent, Portugal's Vasco de Gama had found a sea route to India. He sought to reach India bypassing Arab lands, and the Arab experts helped him. From Africa's Cape of Good Hope, "with the assistance of an Arab pilot [he proceeded] straight across the Indian Ocean until he reached Calicut [in India]"<sup>26</sup>. The Marina's Compass, which the Arabs had used for a long time in their seafaring operations, was from now on to be greatly useful to European adventurers.

Columbus' adventure had not found a western route to India. Rome had finally agreed to support this venture because it would facilitate a Crusade against

the Muslims from the other side of the world, after converting Indians in India to Christianity. But Vasco de Gama had now found a route bypassing the Middle East. Missionaries were to be dispatched to convert those "real" Indians and other Asians farther East in Asia.

At least some of the missionaries were dedicated to their task in Asia, to even help improve the lot of the local populace. It should be remembered that with the Reformation in Rome and Protestant ethical movements, there was now a search for the ethical and moral messages in the teachings of Christ. But pragmatic Christians still convinced that, in accordance with papal decrees, lands and "goods" belonging to the "pagans and infidels" were rightfully those of the Christian countries. Portuguese and Spanish colonialists were followed by the English and other European colonialists, it was seen as entirely within the teachings of Christianity to use whatever means necessary to garner riches for Christian and convert pagans in the bargain. Adventurers were sent over the next centuries, and at times extreme methods were used, e.g., US Admiral Matthew Perry blockading Japanese ports with his heavily armed vessels, in 1853, demanding that Japan open its borders to foreign trade "or else...". Korea was offered the same choice later. Britain, desperate to conquer China, would provide illegal opium to encourage Chinese to become addicts and conquer them.

Steadily, colonialism, and subjugation of non-Christian countries by any means was becoming justified at least at the unconscious level, defensible under the now established dictum that "the end justifies the means." Even after Protestantism had become the State religion in some, and secularism the constitutional guarantee in others, even after belief and practice of Christianity was on a decline, acquiring the great wealth of these non-Christian lands was always justifiable to the Church and not displeasing to the Christian masses. At first colonialism was said to be undertaken to Christianize these barbarians away from their beliefs; later (when the colonials became immensely rich from the wealth they garnered) it was to "civilize" them. Jesus may have asked true believers to reject earthly wealth if they wished to follow him, but now it was infinitely more appealing for Christians to have the right to take wealth from non-Christians by any means. Even Protestant Churches had ruled that this was right.

### ( 3 )

In Spain, alongside the euphoria of finding great riches in new lands, the campaign to exterminate Islam and Muslims continued with greater force. Many thousands had been killed, many more banished. But a great many remained, to be banished and killed later. Dr. Henry Thomas Buckle, writes in *History of Civilization in England* (two vols, Longmans, Green, 1864) "After the reduction, late in the fifteenth century, of the last Mohammedan kingdom in Spain, the great objective of the Spaniards became to convert those whom they had conquered.<sup>27</sup>...By torturing some, by burning others, and by threatening all, they at length succeeded; and we are assured that by the year 1526, there was no Mohammedan in Spain



who had not been converted to Christianity." Muslims who were allowed to remain alive in Spain now were those who had been baptized to Christianity; the Church now held they were entirely subject to discipline by the Inquisition, which, during the rest of the sixteenth century, subjected these Muslims converted to Christianity (or Moriscos as they were now called), "to the most barbarous treatment...an edict was issued by Philip II, in 1566, ordering the Moriscos to abandon everything which by the slightest possibility could remind them of their former religion. They were commanded, under severe penalties, to learn Spanish, and to give up all their Arabic books. They were forbidden to read their native language, or to write it, or even to speak it in their own houses... They were to indulge in no amusements which had been practiced by their fathers; neither were they to wear such cloths as they had been accustomed to. Their women were to go unveiled; and as bathing was a heathenish custom, all public baths were to be destroyed, and even all baths in private houses."<sup>28</sup> In a footnote, (Vol. II, p.55) Prof. Buckle reproduces the provisions of this order in Spanish and later a footnote in French.

Roth (in *Spanish Inquisition*) confirms this: "Spying and informing [on the former Muslims] were encouraged...above all, the scrupulous regard for personal cleanliness which distinguished these [Muslims] believers were among the misdeeds which might bring a man to his death."<sup>29</sup>

But while killings, banishment and tortures against the Muslims had commenced after Ferdinand and Isabella conquered all Muslim lands in Spain in 1492, even worse horrors were to come after Spain, angry with incessant English piracy of Spanish ships to and from the New World, had sent the Spanish Armada to battle England. Though Philip himself had married Mary, former English Queen and sister of Queen Elizabeth I, his patience was exhausted by the constant piracy of Spanish vessels by the British. What angered Spain most was that periodically England promised to stop its piracy but after a full, it would increase greatly, and quite openly. Spain's riches from the New World were a tempting target for the English. No less a pirate than Francis Drake had been sent by England's William Cecil government to steal from the Spanish ships in the New World. England's piracy had been tolerated by Spain for several years, but the Spanish "had been steadily provoked by [English premier] Cecil to the last point of endurance for the past fifteen years."<sup>31</sup> In 1588, the Spanish prepared a large fleet (armada) for the invasion of England. But though blessed by the Church as certain to win, that invasion failed, hampered greatly by bad weather, which the English called "the Protestant wind," as the Spanish Armada met with disaster mainly because of the foul weather it encountered. But the Church explained this Armada disaster, which it had promised would lead to a great Spanish victory, this way: "The Archbishop assured the king...that all the disasters which had befallen the monarchy, had been caused by the presence of these [Muslim] unbelievers...he declared that the Armada, which Philip II sent against England in 1588, had been destroyed, because God would not allow even that pious enterprise to succeed, while those who undertook it, left heretics undisturbed at home."<sup>30</sup> The Archbishop of Valencia also saw the hand of God in this: "He therefore exhorted the king [Philip] to exile all the Moriscos

[Muslim converts to Christianity], except some whom he might condemn to the galleys, and others who could become slaves and labourers in the mines of America."

"These remonstrances, besides being in accordance with the known views of the Spanish Church, were warmly supported by the personal influence of the Archbishop of Toledo, the primate of Spain. In only one respect did he differ from the views advocated by the Archbishop of Valencia. The Archbishop of Valencia thought that [Moriscoe] children under seven years of age need not share in the general banishment but might, without danger to the faith, be separated from their parents, and kept in Spain. The Archbishop of Toledo strongly objected to this. *He refused to run the risk of pure Christian blood being polluted by infidels; and he declared that sooner than leave one of these unbelievers to corrupt the land, he would have all of them, men, women, and children, at once put to the sword...* That they should all be slain, instead of being banished, was the desire of a powerful party in the Church... Bleda, the celebrated Dominican, one of the most influential men of his time...said...every Moriscoe in Spain should have his throat cut, because it was impossible to tell which of them were Christians at heart, and it was enough to leave the matter to God, who knew his own, and who would reward in the next world those who were really Catholic."

Torture, beatings, death and expulsion of remaining Muslims had ebbed and flowed for many years now. Occasionally fanaticism was satisfied with repeated, forced conversion. For instance, "On November 3, [1525] Charles V enclosed the papal brief to the inquisitors, with instructions to enforce it without delay...having made the Moors understand the fate in store for them, on November 25th he issued a general decree of expulsion. All those of Valencia were to be out of Spain by December 31st, and those of Catalonia and Aragon by January 31, 1526. As in 1502, there was no exemption promised for conversion, but similarly the obstacles thrown in the way of expatriation showed the real intent of the edict... At the same time, was published a papal brief ordering, under pain of excommunication, all Christians to aid in enforcing the imperial decrees, and all Moors to listen without replying to the teachings of the Gospel. Still another edict, which ordered that all Moors must be baptized by December 8th, or be prepared to leave the country showed that conversion would relieve from exile. Then the Inquisition gave notice that it was prepared to act, and it published tremendous censures, with a penalty of a thousand florins against all failing to aid it against those who obstinately resisted the sweetness of the gospel and the benignant plans of the emperor... Fray Antonio de Guevara, who was foremost in the work, boasts that he baptized twenty thousand families, but the Mariscos subsequently asserted that this wholesale conversion was accomplished by corraling them in pens and scattering water over them... Thus was Valencia converted and pacified; the Moriscos, as we may now call them, were disarmed, the pulpits of their alfuques were torn down, their Korans were burnt, and orders were given to instruct them competently in the [Christian] faith."<sup>32</sup> Any attempt to revert to their old practices, even social or cultural would be cause for prosecution. Buckles reports that there are no records kept by Spain of the total number of Moriscos (converted Muslims) killed, just occasional

records. For instance, in 1609 alone "about a million of the most industrious inhabitants of Spain [the Muslim converts] were hunted down like wild beasts because the sincerity of their religious beliefs was doubtful" (ibid). Now, after the Armada disaster, even the presence of these converted Muslims was intolerable. The Inquisition was going to take no prisoners.

"As most of the men and all the women could speak only Arabic, they could use it for ten years, during which time they must learn Castilian or Valencian," reports Lea and adds that the old Muslim cemeteries were removed, new Christian ones made, "the mosques now converted to churches"<sup>33</sup>

The fierce punishments, tortures and killings after the failure of the Spanish Armada in 1588 and the subsequent actions over the next decades ensured that no converted Morisco who held on to any of the Muslim or Arab practices was allowed to survive in Spain.

## (4)

It is important to recognize that *the Inquisition was not undertaken on moral grounds*. "The object of the Inquisition was the preservation of the purity of [Christian] faith and *not the improvement of morals*. The view taken of its duties as to the latter is set forth in the comments of the Suprema on the report by de Soto Salazar of his visitation, in 1566, of the Barcelona tribunal. Clement, Abbot of Ripoll, was prosecuted for saying that so great was the mercy of God that he would pardon a sinner who confessed, even though he had not a firm intention to abstain in future, and *also for keeping a nun as a mistress*. He was fined in four hundred ducats, and was ordered to break off relations with the nun under pain of a thousand ducats. The Suprema sharply reprimanded Inquisitor Padilla for inflicting so heavy a penalty and for exceeding his jurisdiction in prohibiting the unlawful connection. So, when the inquisitors fined Jaime Bocca, an unmarried familiar twelve ducats for keeping a married woman as mistress, the Suprema told them that it was none of their [Inquisitors'] business... The same principle, as we have seen, was observed in the treatment of solicitation. The question of morals was studiously excluded as a matter entirely beyond the purview of the Inquisition."<sup>34</sup> Later, Lea tells us of methods of torture used: "The inquisition thus had no special refinements of torture and indeed...it confined itself to a few methods out of the abundant repertory of the public functionaries. In the early period only two tortures were generally in vogue — the *garrucha* or pulleys and the water-torture... [Subsequently, - about 1646 - new methods of torture were applied]...The [new] methods were the *cordeles* and the *garrotes*, of which there were three kinds, the *vuelta de trampa*, the *mancuera*, and stretching the accused in the *poltro* or rack."<sup>35</sup>

The results of glorious victories and riches that the Church had promised if the "pollution" of evil religions, Islam and Judaism, was removed, did not quite work out. "The best systems of husbandry then known, were practiced by the Moriscoes...by their expulsion, all this was destroyed at a blow and most of it was

destroyed for ever." And, Buckle adds "arts and manufacture either degenerated, or were entirely lost, and immense regions of arable land were left uncultivated...these solitudes gave refuge to smugglers and brigands, who succeeded the industrious inhabitants [the Moriscoes or converted Muslims] occupying them; and it is said that from the expulsion of the Moriscoes is to be dated the existence of those organized bands of robbers, which after this period, became the scourge of Spain."<sup>36</sup>

## (5)

What puzzled many scholars elsewhere in later years is why there were not any intellectuals in Spain who wrote or spoke out against the extremism of the Inquisition. The fact is that the writers and chroniclers in Spain were almost entirely part of the Church or entirely caught up in the fanaticism of the time. The Church's power dominated the country. On very rare occasions, someone spoke up. In a remarkable document, "the Cortes, assembled in Madrid, declared that never a day passed in which laymen were not deprived of their property to enrich ecclesiastics; and the evil, they said, had grown to such a height, that there were then in Spain upwards of nine thousand monasteries, besides nunneries...Davila, who lived in the reign of Philip III, affirms that in 1623, the two orders of Dominicans and Franciscans alone amounted to thirty-two thousand. The other clergy increased in proportion...In Europe...the most influential writers, such as Bacon and Descartes, being laymen, rather hostile to the Church than friendly to it, and composing their works with views purely temporal. But in Spain no change of this sort occurred. In that country, the Church retained her hold over the highest as well as over the lowest intellects... Cervantes, three years before his death, became a Franciscan monk [in fact he began to wear monk habit from 1613, and became a monk in 1616]...Lopes de Vega...was an officer of the Inquisition; and in 1623 he assisted at an auto da fe'...in which...a heretic was burned...Montalvan... held office in the Inquisition. Tarrega, Mira de Mescua, and Tirso de Molina were all successful writers for the stage, and were all clergymen...Solis, the celebrated historian of Mexico, was also a clergyman. Sandoval, whom Philip III appointed historiographer, and who is the principle authority of the reign of Charles V, was at first Benedictine monk, afterwards became bishop of Tuy, and later still was raised to the [Holy] See of Pampeluna. Davila, the biographer of Philip III, was a priest...whatever concerned the Church was treated not only with respect, but with timid veneration...The more cruel and preposterous a custom was, the greater the number of persons who wrote in its favor. The quantity of Spanish works to prove the necessity of religious persecution is incalculable; and this took place in a country where not one in a thousand doubted the propriety of burning heretics...Indeed, it often happened that a single convent or a single cathedral, would have more than one historian; each seeking to distance his immediate competitor, and all striving which could do most to honour the Church and to uphold the interests of which the Church was guardian. Under Philip III they [the clergy] gained an immense



accession of strength; and in that very reign they signalized this new epoch of their power by obtaining, with circumstances of horrible barbarity, the expulsion of the whole Moorish [Muslim] nation. *This was an act so atrocious in itself, and terrible in its consequences, that some writers have ascribed to it alone, the subsequent ruin of Spain*<sup>137</sup> says Buckle.

## (6)

For many years, at the direction of the Church, the vast majority of Western historians and scholars have tried to ignore or severely underplay the role of Muslim Spain in the education and civilization of Europe. But that fact emerges quite easily, *if one scratches below the surface*. But most Western writers have preferred not to do so, or at least *ignore what they discovered*. With furious commitment by the Church and those it ordered, that brainwash has worked remarkably well, even to this day. But when those creators of Spanish civilization were, in their entirety, tortured, killed, banished or forced into Christianity (and never certain when they would be sent to the torture chambers), clearly that country, even with wealth captured from New World colonies, now in the hands of the corrupt and the ignorant, could not prosper. And that is precisely what happened, gradually, to Spain, as honest historians like Prof. Buckles report: "While every other country [in Europe] was advancing, Spain alone was receding...even the Spaniards who, when it was too late, were stung with shame, *have abstained from writing what would only the history of their own humiliation; so that there is no detailed account of the wretched reigns of Philip IV and Charles II, which together comprised nearly eighty years*. Some facts, however, I have been able to collect, and they are very significant. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the population of Madrid was estimated to be 400,000; at the beginning of the eighteenth century, less than 200,000. Seville, one of the richest cities in Spain, possessed in the sixteenth century upward of sixteen thousand looms...By the reign of Philip V, 300 looms; a Cortes reports to Philip V in 1162 vines and olive (the mainstay of the area) now almost non-existent. Toledo in the middle of 16th century had fifty woolen manufacturers; in 1665 it had only 13...The art of manufacturing silk, for which Toledo was celebrated, was entirely lost...Other branches of industry shared the same fate...In the sixteenth century Spain enjoyed great repute for the manufacture of gloves [exported everywhere, England, France, etc]...But Martinez de Mata, who wrote in the year 1655 assures us that [this industry] has disappeared...In the once flourishing town of Castile, everything was going to ruin. The decay of Burgos was equally rapid...The beautiful provinces of the south, richly endowed by nature, had formally been so wealthy [but] by the year 1640 it was hardly possible to impose a tax on them...In the villages near Madrid the inhabitants were literally famishing...All over Spain the same destitution prevailed...and in many of the towns upward of two-thirds of the houses were, by the end of the seventeenth century, utterly destroyed...In 1680 not only the workmen of Madrid, but large numbers of the tradesmen, organized themselves into bands,

broke open houses, and robbed and murdered the inhabitants in the face of day...The police of Madrid, unable to obtain the arrears of their pay, disbanded and *gave themselves up to rapine*...in 1699, Stanhope, the British minister then residing in Madrid, writes, that never a day passed in which people were not killed in the streets for bread; that his own secretary had seen five women stifled to death by the crowd before a bakehouse...upwards of twenty thousand additional beggars from the country had recently flocked to the capital."<sup>138</sup> In the meanwhile, the killing of the remaining Muslims (though all converted to Christianity) had not ended. Any suspected of not being fully Christian in their faith were slaughtered whenever they could be found.

The Church had killed or banished all the Muslims and Jews in Spain. Some who survived, especially the Jews, had now fled to other parts of Europe, many to what is now Algeria and to Muslim Middle East. The expertise in the arts and sciences went with the Muslims and Jews. Many of them hid their religious affiliation in Europe as well. Some changed their names, others had their names Christianized for them. Europe, especially southern Europe where many went, benefited hugely from their presence. As Muslims had, during Frederick's rule in southern Europe, these Spanish survivors greatly advanced what Western history books were to call the Renaissance; already the religious independence which had begun in Bosnia and elsewhere in Eastern Europe which the Established Church of Rome and Constantinople had tried so furiously to crush since the eleventh century, and which had inspired the Catharist movement of the thirteenth century in France, was now the inspiration for the Protestant movement which now burst all over Europe. But while some intellectuals had recognized the Christian "heretics" of Eastern Europe as Protestant pioneers, the Protestant Churches soon hated them just as the Catholic and Orthodox Churches did, because by the end of the sixteenth century, many of those early Christian Protestants of Eastern Europe, *along with many Catholics of the area*, were expressing the ultimate act of religious independence: *they were gradually becoming Muslims*. How could they do that, asked the Christian Churches of every denomination, after Europe had been told for so many centuries what a devilish religion Islam was? There was only one answer. They *must* have sold their souls to the devil to share in Muslim wealth.

## Chapter 9

# The Protestant Spectrum: Luther, Calvin, Henry VIII

(1)

Even as the usual wars, killings and intrigues proceeded between European rulers and popes, each seeking more territory and riches, a serious challenge to the authority of the pope as a spiritual monarch of Christianity was spreading all across Europe. And unlike the past "heretic" movement, which could be physically crushed out of existence, this one would succeed and lead to a huge change in Christendom. Reform of the Church led to opening Europe to the vision of great advances made in the Muslim world. Europe was inaccurately to dub this awakening the Renaissance, by claiming ancient Greece's civilization as its own.

At first the Church used the Inquisition. The most gruesome excesses were to be conducted in Spain later, but in the 13th century the Inquisition spread its tentacles sporadically all across Europe. One reason for the Church's fury was that through Muslim influence, there was a thirst for learning. "Its victims, condemned for heresy, were perishing in all directions... the convicts were so numerous as to require pens made of stakes with straw. It was thus that before the Archbishop of Rheims and seventeen other prelates, one hundred and eighty-three heretics, together with their pastor, were buried alive... The papacy was firm, not just in its resolve but in fighting the Muslim influence of learning. The clergy was [now] being ordered to acquire learning... At the schools of Paris, AD 1215, Aristotle was now allowed to be studied in parts but forbidding whatever had come through Arab channels." Pope Gregory XI issued these prohibitions in 1231; Pope Clement IV confirmed this in AD 1265, reports Draper.<sup>1</sup>

The Catholic Church faced other challenges. An ominous book called "The Everlasting Gospel" had appeared about 1250, as a revelation to a priest Cyril by an angel and he had given it to Abbot Joachim. It was gaining popularity, even promoted

by a Franciscan friar John of Parma. Essentially its adherents claimed that the "Everlasting Gospel" supplanted the New Testament, "that in the coming ages, there would be no longer any need for faith, but that all things would be according to wisdom and reason."<sup>2</sup> reports Prof. Draper. Pope Alexander IV immediately ordered all copies to be destroyed and warned that anyone found with a copy would be excommunicated. But the work gained reputation among "spiritualists".

But what embarrassed all of Christendom the most now was that several members of that extremely revered, sacred organization blessed by the Roman Church called the Knights Templars were creating havoc by destroying the negative image of Islam that had been so carefully cultivated over the centuries. When this group of Templars arrived in Europe from Jerusalem, they created a storm, says Prof. Draper, by claiming that "Muhammad was not an imposter, but the author of a pure and noble Theism, that Saladin was not a treacherous assassin, a despicable liar, but a most valiant, courteous, and gentle knight."<sup>3</sup> Differences were forgotten between France, England and the Pope, as they combined to deal with this horror. The Templars were arrested and tortured in France, the Pope issued a Bull commanding the King of England to similarly arrest all Templars. The English Parliament as well as the University of Paris (run by the clergy) agreed. According to Draper's researches, 113 Templars were burnt at the stake. Their grandmaster while burning to death is reported by Prof. Draper to have cried "Clement! thou wicked and false judge, I summon thee to meet me within forty days at the bar of God."<sup>4</sup> He issued a similar challenge to King Philip of France. *Within the year both Pope Clement VI and King Philip were dead.*

Open criticism of papal degeneracy was also finally emerging. A philosophical treatise published by Marilio of Padua called *The Defender of Peace*, which was not only critical of papal lifestyle but questioned the prevailing belief that St. Peter had even been to Rome. And in 1297 AD John Peter Oliver in Sicily published *The Comment of the Apocalypse* asked for the abolition of Roman Catholicism, "stigmatized that Church as a purple harlot", that "their work was done, their doom sealed."<sup>5</sup>

The popes had continued to live a life of luxury and self-indulgence and this did not help the Roman Church. In 1334 AD Pope John XXII's fortune at his death was found to be "18 million gold florins and 7 million in plates and jewels" in liquid assets alone. His successor Pope Benedict XII drank so heavily that "there is a tradition that to him is due the origin of the proverb 'as drunk as a pope'...in the subsequent pontificate of [Pope] Clement VI A.D. 1342 the court at Avignon became the most voluptuous in Christendom...Patriarch [the historian] who lived in Avignon at the time, speaks of it as a vast brothel. His own sister had been seduced by the Holy Father, John XXII," says Draper<sup>6</sup>. When Pope Urban V decided to move back to Rome, there was so much hostility that he rushed back to Avignon. Gregory XI did return to Rome in 1376 but when he died there were chaos again. Urban VI was selected by the enclave of cardinals, but then "they proclaimed his election void and substituted Clement VII for him. They were actually at one time on the point of choosing the King of France as Pope" says



Draper<sup>7</sup>. Fearing a similar reversal after he had been elected, Pope Urban VII had several of the cardinals seized and tortured in his presence to save his Papacy "while he recited the breviary...he caused the Bishop of Aquila to be killed on the road-side. Others he tied in sacks and threw into the sea at Genoa. It was supposed, not without reason, that he was insane"<sup>8</sup>.

At the Council of Pisa, the two competitive popes (Pope Benedict XIII and Pope Gregory XII) were summoned, the Council "declared their crimes and excesses...deposed of them both appointing in their stead Pope Alexander V. There were now, therefore, *three popes*" though, in fairness, it should be noted that only one was recognized by the Council. When Alexander V died, his successor Pope John XXIII was shown "to derive revenue from licensing of prostitutes, gambling houses and usurers" reports the courageous Draper<sup>9</sup>.

The Council of Constance was called in 1415 AD to select one pope and reform the Church and its clergy. But it ended up arresting John Huss and having him burnt alive, as we have noted earlier. He prayed as he died, Wycliffe was already dead; there are conflicting reports about him, one says his bones were unearthed, another says the order was given to do so but it was not carried out. Two of his followers, a priest named William Sautree and a tailor named John Badbee were burnt at the stake at the order of the pope.

The Council of Basle, this one under German influence, commenced in 1431 and lasted until 1448. It made a practical attempt at reform. It cited Pope Eugenius IV and seventeen of his cardinals for contumacy, suspended the pope, and appointed Adameus of Savoy as the new Pope Felix V. He was married and had children. But this was accepted by many who saw the pope now not as a vicar of Christ, says Draper, but as the governor of Christianity.

It was in this vulnerable, desperate state of compromise, of intrigue and growing protests even by loyal secular lords against money demands by the pope, that the Protestant movement, crushed in its earlier forms, now became a major threat to the Papacy in Rome. On All Saints Day, November 1, 1517, Martin Luther, son of a poor Saxon miner and a former Augustine monk, pinned a list of ninety-five theses against the practice of the pope (now Leo X) in demanding funds for a variety of purposes and providing Indulgences (a practice of popes, granting to donors of money freedom from suffering in purgatory prior to heaven — the relief depending upon how much one donated). Only God can forgive sin, said Luther, not popes. There was already growing resentment in much of Europe, of papal personal greed and degenerate lifestyle, the dictatorial methods employed by the Church and its clergy, forbidding lay individuals (even if literate) to read the Bible, just follow religious practice as the Church directed. Rulers were particularly resentful of the huge compulsory donations demanded by the Pope each year, and by now many had rebelled at the levies.

Luther is reported (by Draper, Belloc, Davies, among others) to have been surprised at the very favorable reaction he received especially in German principalities, from princes and eventually even from peasants. The Pope however was furious and ordered Luther to appear in person in Rome. Frederick, Elector of

Saxony, whose subject Luther was, said he need not, indeed *could not* go. This probably saved Luther as "he would probably have been burnt" writes Davies<sup>10</sup>. In 1520, the Pope excommunicated Luther. But North German princes were all supportive of Luther. So the common folk felt they *too should be allowed to think*. This troubled the princes, because "the peasants argued that if they were equal to their masters in the eyes of God, the inequalities of their positions in the world were quite irrational and contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures."<sup>11</sup> In 1525 the peasants rose in rebellion. Luther, worried that this result of his own rebellion would alarm his most valuable supporters, the princes, "published a pamphlet against 'the murdering, thieving hordes of peasants' urging the princes to 'knock down, strangle and stab' them and even going so far as to assert that 'in such times a prince can merit heaven better by bloodshed than by prayer'...it lost Luther the support of the masses [though he later apologized for the comments]...[but] half of the princes of Germany threw off the authority of Rome. Some of them did so from religious motives, but far the greater number did so for political reasons...their ideal was a national Church dependent upon the throne."<sup>12</sup>

A year after Luther's denunciation of the indulgences, Zwingli commenced preaching a new Christian doctrine at Zurich in Switzerland; eighteen years later, French reformer John Calvin made Geneva his home until he died in 1564, during which time he became in effect the governor of the city in religious and secular matters. His was a very strict form of Christianity; "public worship was compulsory; gay cloths and dancing were made punishable offenses; and immorality was sometimes punished by death. Heretics [from Calvinist Christianity] were burnt, and there is one instance of a child being beheaded for having struck his parent...and its main doctrine... declares that *all are predestinated at birth either to everlasting happiness, or to everlasting damnation*" writes Davies<sup>13</sup>.

Calvinism was to produce men like John Knox [leader of the Scottish Calvinists] and among those who adopted Calvinism included the Scots, the Dutch, the French Huguenots, the English Puritans. While the birth of Protestantism was to lead to a substantial reduction in the blatant corruption and degenerate ways associated with the Roman Church hierarchy from this point onwards, it also ushered yet another reason for brutality, torture and genocide. Between 1560 and 1600 the Calvinist Dutch were to win their independence from the Catholic Philip of Spain, and the Huguenots of France were tolerated as long as they stayed away from Paris, these concessions came about only after mass killings, such as "the massacre of St. Bartholomew in France, and the barbaric methods [mass slaughter at one point] of [Spanish ruler] Philip's representative, the Duke Alva, in the Netherlands. In Germany, from 1618 to 1648 was fought what was known as the Thirty Years War, when the Emperor Ferdinand II made a determined attempt to stamp out Calvinism and possibly Lutherism as well. The Lutheran King of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, came to the assistance of the Protestants, and the war ended with Germany split up as before between Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists, and each prince free to determine the religion of his own territories"<sup>14</sup>.

## (2)

While the European continent was fermenting with doctrinaire revolution, "there was no trace of religious revolution in England... the revolution was introduced into England not by any change in religion, but a [different] breach with Rome," writes Belloc.<sup>15</sup>

Henry suffered all his life from a venereal disease (believed to be syphilis) but his sexual urges were not impaired. He had taken various mistresses along with frequent one-night dalliances. One of his mistresses was Mary Boleyn "whom, when he had tired of her, Henry had married to a country gentleman of the name of Carey," says Belloc<sup>16</sup>. By this time Mary's sister Ann had caught his eye. Ann was much more ambitious and decided she could coax him to make her Queen. He agreed he would. There was a problem of course: Henry already had a Queen, Catherine of Aragon. So Ann Boleyn and Henry worked out a plot. They would get the Pope to annul Henry's marriage to Catherine. This was about 1525, when the Pope was very worried about the Lutheran movement and desperately in need of support from rulers. *He considered Henry a devout Catholic.*

Henry asked Thomas Wolsey a powerful Churchman for help. Wolsey, "typical of the Church of that day, or at least of many of its higher officials: he thought nothing of keeping a mistress and having an illegitimate family, of retaining in his hands all manner of separate clerical incomes."<sup>17</sup> Henry and Wolsey worked out a plan for divorce. But the very Catholic Catherine heard of it and was furious. She refused to agree to an amicable divorce. And the Pope Clement III, while keen to keep Henry as friend, was even more keen not to upset Catherine's brother Charles V of Spain (at the time, with New World possessions, one of the most powerful monarchs in the world). Perhaps coincidentally, in 1527, an army of Charles V attacked and devastated Rome, captured it, grabbed the Pope and took him prisoner.

It is not necessary to delve into the many plots devised by Henry and Wolsey except to note two: they claimed that Catherine and Henry's older brother Arthur had consummated their marriage before he died, therefore her marriage to Henry was null and void. But Catherine challenged that, providing admissions made at the time that she was a virgin when she married Henry. Then Henry's advisors claimed the marriage of a widow of one brother to another was against the law of God. *Note that this was years after Henry and Catherine had daughter Mary* so the argument was soon regarded as weak and dismissed. Henry and Ann Boleyn now sent a separate representative to the Pope, he "threatened the Pope", Belloc says. *So Pope Clement III agreed that Catherine could not appeal to him about her marriage.*

There were unforeseen delays, another of the usual disease epidemics in filth-ridden London, then one of Wolsey's many shady activities became too obvious and he was forced to resign. Thomas Cromwell took his place. And he made short work of the whole issue of Henry's marriage to Catherine. He decided that for Henry's divorce to work, "the first step was to put the whole body of the Church

in England completely under Government control."<sup>18</sup> So in 1531 England's churches collectively voted that the King was "their single Protector only and supreme Lord and, as far as the Law of Christ allows, supreme Head"<sup>19</sup>.

As a result, *all the fortunes in revenue that previously went to the Pope would now come to the Crown.* Ann Boleyn chose Thomas Cranmer to be the new Archbishop of Canterbury, the highest religious office. By now Ann was pregnant and Henry and Ann had already begun to live together openly as man and wife. Cranmer became Archbishop of Canterbury on March 30, 1533. "On April 23, 1533, Cranmer pronounced Henry's marriage to Catherine null and void. On June 1, Whit Sunday, Ann was crowned."<sup>20</sup> On September 7, three months after being installed as Henry's wife and Queen of England, Ann Boleyn gave birth to a girl, christened Elizabeth. "In England statutes were passed by Cromwell in the Parliament...declaring it high treason to question the new succession [replacement of Queen Ann Boleyn by Queen Catherine]. The Pope's name was removed from the Liturgy, and on November 3, 1534, the decisive Act of Supremacy...was passed."<sup>21</sup>

Now began "The Reign of Terror" as it was later called, to enforce the decision among those who might publicly object. A devout Catholic, Elizabeth Barton, known as the Holy Maid of Kent, had publicly denounced the divorce. She and six of her followers were killed on April 21, 1534. Fisher, the Bishop of Rochester, and Sir Thomas More, one of the very few English men of letters respected even in Europe, refused to take the Oath of Supremacy to King Henry as the religious head of England. They were beheaded the following year. There were some monks who were still strictly loyal to the Pope. *"The heads of the three Carthusian houses were hanged, drawn and quartered, and of the remainder of the order many died in prison after having been chained up to a wall for weeks on end."*<sup>22</sup>

But now Henry was bored with Ann Boleyn, and soon took new mistresses. He made no secret of his affairs. One of his mistresses was Ann's lady-in-waiting Jane Seymour. Ann "made violent scenes, and took on lovers herself; she was even accused of incest."<sup>23</sup>

On January 8, 1536, the unfortunate Queen Catherine died; but she had lived to see Henry reject the woman who had started her own marital tragedy. In April that year, it seems, "Henry learned of the way in which Ann jeered at him behind his back and he named a committee... to report upon her conduct."<sup>24</sup> They found her guilty of misconduct. Now Cranmer, the man Ann had chosen to be Archbishop of Canterbury, and who had performed the ceremonies at her coronation, *declared her marriage to Henry null and void.* On May 19, 1536, Ann Boleyn was beheaded in the Tower of London. "Henry married Jane Seymour immediately after"<sup>25</sup>. Henry was still yearning for a son, and Jane Seymour gave birth to a boy (the future Edward VI). But she died in childbirth. And Edward was sickly from having Henry's venereal disease.

*England's finances, crippled until recently, were now flourishing because all the huge sums that in the past went to the Pope in Rome, were now flowing*



into the English coffers of Henry, the English "pope". Cromwell felt this was not enough. He proceeded to dissolve the smaller monasteries, then even the larger ones, the funds from which were now funneled to the English treasury. Of course there was corruption, a lot of money and vast properties went to the officials who handled the closures, but enough ended up in the national treasury to make England solvent again. At one point, Cromwell considered closing some of the newly opened schools and colleges. "Even the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge only narrowly escaped — had King Henry lived a few weeks longer they would have gone the way of the rest, for the proposal to dissolve them was already drawn up when he died"<sup>25</sup>.

Those who wished for the establishment of genuine worship sought to make of the new Church of England something more than a creation to help Henry service his hormones. The institution was now permanent, with the monarch as its head. The monarch had the power to chose and appoint all the clergy, from the Archbishop down, even though the vast majority of the English population were only vaguely aware of the difference; later when England became a constitutional monarchy, it was still the monarch who appointed, but then it was the prime minister of the ruling Party who did the choosing and the sacking. *The separation of Church and State, much touted in later years, was in fact nominal. It was the State that held the strings. The Church functioned at the State's pleasure, and by rules set by the State.*

Thomas Cromwell decided that while Henry, a widower again, might be happy with his various sexual escapades, it was time to get him married again, this time to someone with useful economic and political benefits for England. Cromwell chose Ann of Cleves, the sister of the Duke of Cleves, a powerful Protestant German prince. She was slightly stout. Perhaps he felt that as Henry was now very fat himself, and had many mistresses, he would not mind Ann's girth. He was wrong. Henry was furious when he saw her. He had Cromwell arrested, "his property seized, and in less than three weeks a Bill of Attainder... was formed against him. He pleaded for his life in the most abject manner" but on July 28, 1540 Cromwell was put to death. "Just a week later Henry, having got the clergy to declare his marriage with Ann of Cleves invalid, brought to court as his new Queen the Duke of Norfolk's niece, the young Catherine Howard."<sup>27</sup>

Within a few months, however, the Archbishop of Canterbury and his allies, now seeking to gain power as a Protestant Church, provided Henry with evidence of "the unchastity of the young Queen, Catherine, before marriage"<sup>28</sup>. Henry sentenced her to death Feb 13, 1541, and even "imprisoned the Duke of Norfolk, his mother, and the father of the late Queen [his father-in-law]". They were later killed at Henry's orders.

Henry now went to war against his nephew King James V of Scotland (son of his sister Mary), who had married a French princess. While Calvinism had taken root in Scotland, its royalty was still Catholic. Although Henry "did not succeed in getting [Scotland's Catholic] Cardinal Beaton murdered, but the young Scottish King in a counter-invasion [i.e., by England] was disastrously defeated"

then "died of grief" according to the official report! Henry now tried to get his son Edward married to James V's little daughter Mary, now heir to Scotland's throne.

England next invaded France, captured Boulogne, had "its inhabitants massacred in the middle of September 1544, but the war had cost by that time as much as three years' whole revenue of the monastic lands! The currency was ruined"<sup>29</sup>. England was forced to sell monastic lands in great blocks at throwaway prices; *many of the "stately homes" came into being from this bargain-basement purchase, as did that new English upper class, "the landed gentry", who bought them.*

Now England consolidated its control over Ireland. Wales was easier as the Tudors were originally Welsh. In Ireland the Catholic influence was still predominant but Henry's powerful artillery crushed the opposition. In one case, that of the powerful Fitzgerald family, they were invited to a banquet, and "butchered at Tyburn without trial or defense on February 3 1537"<sup>30</sup>. Four years later, England announced that Henry VIII was no longer merely "Lord of Ireland" but "King of Ireland." (ibid)

In 1543 Henry, two years a widower after beheading Catherine Howard, married for the sixth time; this was Catherine Parr. This lucky one was to survive him. While Henry fought Catholics in Ireland, Scotland and France, in belief, it is argued by some historians, that *he was a Catholic at heart!* "Henry maintained full orthodoxy [Catholicism] save in the matter of the Papacy, till his death; he had personally presided over trials for heresy, and had issued a book called *The King's Book* strongly emphasizing and supporting all Catholic doctrine...He also insisted that the vernacular translation of the Bible should be orthodox, to the exclusion of the heretical version of Tyndale."<sup>31</sup>

Henry VIII died on January 28 1547. He had suffered agonies towards the end. His body was fully covered by then with the swollen, smelling eruptions from the venereal disease he had all his adult life. The Church of England he founded would be challenged by Catholicism for a time but would eventually become a *legitimate* institution. But this legitimacy would also provide legitimacy to Machiavellian politics. We shall examine this and other developments in England, leading, as they did, to a tradition of *religious* rationales for piracy and conquests of rich, foreign "pagan" lands.

( 2 )

Edward had inherited his father's disease and clearly did not have long to live. In his young life he had developed strong Calvinist beliefs. And he was greatly impressed with his 15 yr old cousin Lady Jane Grey's intelligence and idealism. Whether he decided it himself or was persuaded by his Council, *King Edward signed a will appointing 15-yr old Lady Jane Grey as his successor*. His Councilors was willing as they wanted to keep control of what had been the vast papal lands and riches that they feared might revert to Rome if the Catholic Mary came to the throne. A week later, Edward died, June 6, 1553, and the Council had an unpleasant shock. The young new Queen Jane had a mind of her own.

*Had Queen Jane survived, English history (and world history) could have been very different. Jane was very intelligent, a Greek scholar, an idealist, determined to correct the inhuman exploitation of the poor and create a model society. But she was not allowed to survive.*

But Mary (Edward's oldest step-sister, daughter of Catherine of Braganza) was not willing to give up the throne. She was "A woman of thirty-seven, stunted in figure, suffering from very bad health, with a head too large for her body and a deep, harsh, uncouth voice." Curiously, Belloc claims she had "a gentle manner."<sup>1</sup> She wrote to the Council demanding the throne but the Council said Lady Jane Grey was now Queen. So Mary rode across England to get to the powerful Holy Roman Emperor Charles, her cousin, for support. Afraid of a foreign invasion, the Council at first sought France's aid, (Jane was the grand-daughter of a former Queen of France) but by now a large portion of the population (especially outside London) still vaguely Catholic, supported Mary. She rode victorious into London, her half-sister Elizabeth at her side. Having taken the Crown, Queen Mary I imprisoned Queen Jane. Then Mary married Philip of Spain; an alliance with that very powerful nation was a guarantee against the problems she expected from France and Scotland. An attempt to assassinate Jane Grey (now Lady Jane Grey-Dudley) in prison failed when the assassin named Mar, (hired by William Cecil, Queen Mary's favorite Minister, says Belloc) was killed himself. Then Jane Grey's father was accused of being involved in a Protestant plot against Queen Mary. He was executed. Seizing the opportunity, Queen Mary also had the deposed young Queen Lady Jane Grey beheaded in 1556. Now only the young Queen Mary of Scotland, another cousin, married to the heir to the French throne, remained a threat as the only *legitimate* heir.

Queen Mary, a Catholic with her loyal Spanish connections and appointees now set about firmly establishing the Catholic Counter-Reformation. Spain's Ignatius D' Loyola had formed a reform Jesuit society that proclaimed its emphasis on education, good deeds and poverty for its priests. This created a far better image of Catholicism. Mary assured the newly- rich Protestants, now the "landed gentry", that the Church lands upon which they had built their fortunes would not be taken from them under Catholic England. She got the Pope to agree to this as well.

## Chapter 10

# Intrigue and Piracy: The Sanctified Predators

( 1 )

Henry VIII's will named nine-year-old Edward his successor, with a Council during his minority. The sickly Edward had been conceived when Henry's venereal disease was raging, so it was known he would die soon. It was believed that the deformed Mary, though illegitimate, would succeed. If she died, Elizabeth, also declared illegitimate by Parliament, (born three months after Henry married Ann Boleyn) would succeed. *But there was a legitimate line with its supporters*. Mary, Henry's younger sister, had been Queen of France as a child-wife, then married to Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk. Mary's grand-daughter Lady Jane Grey was therefore in line for the throne, as the *truly* legitimate heir.

On February 20, 1547, Edward was crowned king, and was asked to proclaim what Henry VIII had proclaimed when he became King and head of the new Church of England, i.e. proclaim the *Divine Right of Kings*. "This doctrine affirmed that the King of England ruled under the special authority of God, having no superior on earth from his decisions. It was the duty of the subject to obey him in all things without resistance." Now more than ever, fatalism, prevailed then and later in Christendom, so it was argued that as God had made someone king, (and now head of Church as well) *he was the chosen one or god-king*. Centuries later, there was a convenient rationale spread to claim Divine blessings on the British Empire. It was a miraculous reward bestowed by God on His new Chosen People. In the 19th century, the European Boars in Africa similarly claimed they were there to satisfy a Divine purpose: God wanted his newest Chosen People to rule there in the New Jerusalem. About the same time, the Americans, discovering the immense riches in the land they were conquering from the American natives, argued this was the New Jerusalem and they the Chosen People.



There still remained the problem of how to deal with those guilty of "heresy." It was decided that it would be best to prosecute only those guilty of treason. This would avoid mass killings, which was politically inadvisable after beheading the young Queen Jane. As it was, even punishing those found guilty was dangerous, because the "traditional" English method of killing those found guilty of treason was to "hang, draw and quarter" them. This required that the person was first "half-strangled, then cut down, mutilated, ripped up, his heart groped for in his body by the executioner while he was yet *alive* [which was why he was 'half-strangled'] and pulled out, and then his dead body cut into quarters and set up in public places" reports Belloc<sup>2</sup>. Because of the delicate political situation, it was felt safest to just burn those who were considered guilty. From 1555 onwards, a great many were burnt, starting with a Protestant priest named Rogers. The Bishop of Gloucester was next. "In less than four years, close to three hundred people were put to death in this fashion" says Belloc<sup>3</sup>. Others have put the estimate much higher. Senior former advisors to the court were also burnt. Former Archbishop Cranmer begged, pleaded for mercy, recanted his beliefs over and over, sobbed, but was finally burnt March 21, 1556.

Despite her age and physical problems, Queen Mary tried hard to have a child but to no avail. The English government joined her husband Philip in Spain's war against France mainly because Mary was convinced that King Henri II of France wanted to kill her and put her half-sister Elizabeth, though also illegitimate, on the throne, a belief which she felt required only one solution, i.e. kill Elizabeth herself. "Elizabeth life was saved by the intervention of Philip. He knew that his wife Mary might not live long; on her death Mary, Queen of Scotland, married to the French King would be the legitimate Queen of England" says Belloc. Philip of Spain did not want a France-England alliance on both thrones, so he convinced Mary to spare Elizabeth. Elizabeth herself "continued to protest her violent attachment to the Catholic faith and was at pains to get from the Emperor all the articles needed for the Catholic ritual in her chapel; she protested to her sister that she hoped the earth would swallow her alive if she failed in her devotion to the ancient religion — but this the earth never did" says Belloc<sup>4</sup>. This evidently provided the ultimate proof of Elizabeth's Catholicism. Mary died in 1558, naming Elizabeth her successor.

Elizabeth I became queen when she was forty years old; "she was hatched-faced... had been completely bald for ten years, and had to wear a red wig" reports Belloc<sup>5</sup> (as have other honest historians). In reality, Elizabeth apparently did not care whether Protestantism or Catholicism triumphed, only that *she* did. Because the very powerful William Cecil now favored Protestantism, she quickly forgot her "sacred" promises to Mary. Now Cecil proclaimed in her behalf that preaching could only be by official order; magistrates with Catholic sympathies were to be replaced by younger one with Protestant sympathies; and a new Liturgy in English was to replace the Catholic Mass. At first, Elizabeth was careful not to offend the Catholics. When she was crowned January 15, 1559 it was with the Catholic High Mass and the oath she took was the traditional one, to *preserve the Catholic religion*

*intact*. However, Elizabeth's own Prayer Book was found later to be a copy of Edward's "the one which was intensely Calvinist in spirit and designed to obliterate the Mass. And on May 8, 1559 the Act of Supremacy, making it obligatory for the clergy to swear to the supremacy of the monarch".<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth had now officially established the Protestant Church.

King of France died the same year. So Queen Mary of Scotland, married to the heir of that crown, became Queen-consort of France as well. The young Queen Mary of Scotland was at least nominally Catholic as was her husband Francis, King of France. With the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey assassinated, Queen Mary of Scotland *had* the legal right to the throne of England, *not* the illegitimate Elizabeth. But most of the powerful, newly-rich landowners in England and Scotland were also fiercely in favor of Protestantism. *They feared that a return to Catholicism, despite the Pope's reassurance, would lead to their estates being repossessed by the Church.* Elizabeth sought their favor by proclaiming she was a committed Protestant and sought to befriend the Calvinists in Scotland in the religious uprising that now occurred in Scotland.

Elizabeth now demanded through a treaty with the Scottish government that Queen Mary of Scotland and her husband, King Francis of France must acknowledge that Elizabeth was the rightful Queen of England and acknowledge England's suzerainty over Scotland. The treaty also stipulated that Mary had no longer the right to use English arms in her emblem. As the Scottish Assembly had officially abolished jurisdiction of the Papacy, the Mass, the Catholic Baptism "under pain of banishment or death", this weakened Mary's case. But she refused to give up her rights. To top it all, there was now the worst blow of all to Mary's claim. Towards the end of 1559, the young King of France suddenly died, his brother succeeded. Mary, Queen of Scots, at the young age of eighteen, was now a widow. She returned to Scotland. Because she had refused to accept the Treaty of Edinburgh demanded by the English, the latter now tried to capture her as she traveled from France to Scotland. The young Queen faced even greater dangers after she reached Scotland as the Calvinist majority was very much in alliance with Elizabeth's government. Mary faced yet another great hazard. Dudley, one of the young men Elizabeth had established in her stable of lovers, was very attracted to Mary, who was reportedly beautiful. This made Elizabeth even more furious. It may have been that fearful of arousing jealousy in the English Queen, Mary hurriedly married Darnley, a strange choice as he was even younger than she was and, says Belloc, and "thoroughly corrupt." He had a weak claim as well to the English throne. Whatever Mary's reasons for the choice, the marriage broke up within a few months, leaving Mary pregnant.

Then Darnley was murdered. The Calvinist and English enemies of Mary immediately claimed one Boswell had killed him on Mary's instructions. While traveling to keep the child in safe custody, Mary is said by some to have been kidnapped by Boswell and forced to raise Boswell to dukedom as his ransom price. Others claim she met him by design and that she raised him to dukedom because she was his willing paramour. An army took Mary from Boswell's

hideout, arrested her *but let Boswell go free*. Mary was imprisoned in Lochleven Castle in Scotland. But she escaped, riding all the way to London where, very foolishly, she felt certain her cousin Elizabeth would save her life. But Elizabeth had her imprisoned.

After a long and complicated series of intrigues, the Pope excommunicated Elizabeth while both Spain and France questioned the continuing imprisonment of Mary, Queen of Scots. Fearing that delays may cause international intervention for Mary's release, Elizabeth quickly ordered Mary's execution. "She [Mary] asked for the [Catholic] Sacraments and was refused them."<sup>7</sup> On February 8, 1587 she was beheaded. The last serious, legitimate claimant to the throne was gone.

*One daughter of Henry VIII (Mary) had now beheaded Lady Jane Grey because Grey was Protestant, while Mary herself survived because she was Catholic and had strong Catholic connections throughout Europe. Now Elizabeth, another daughter of Henry VIII had beheaded Mary, Queen of Scots, a legitimate claimant to the English throne but Catholic, while Elizabeth survived, though born illegitimate, because she claimed to be Protestant!*

## (3)

Elizabeth, whom Western historians have titled the "Virgin Queen", combined a remarkable talent for the consumption of men and beer with a remarkable ability to inspire colonialism and piracy (called "privateering" as it was undertaken for the Crown). Her capacity for beer was, apparently, quite remarkable for a middle-aged woman in poor health. Like Catherine "The Great" of Russia, her physical unattractiveness and passion for sex with a variety of men made it essential that she use her "royal" power to get the men she wanted to her bed. Little is known of Elizabeth's early love life, but Dudley (the Earl of Leicester), much younger, was one of her steady lovers after she became queen. There was also another deep infatuation, this one for the Duke of Anjou, brother of the French King, and twenty years her junior. "Her public and private endearments with him were scandalous"<sup>8</sup>. Reportedly, she did manage to seduce him on a couple of occasions, but Anjou was unwilling to have any lasting relationship with her. In between, Elizabeth managed to use a series of young ambitious men as lovers, as varied as dancer Hattton — *intermittently*, it is said — and even William Cecil, the artful minister on whom she depended so much in matters of state. Through her later years, Elizabeth openly participated in wild revelry, such as the week-long extravaganza at Kenilworth Castle, which some (but not Walter Scott) characterize as an orgy. At age sixty-four, Elizabeth took Essex, a young man not yet thirty whose relationship with Leicester, Elizabeth's long-time lover, was complex, to say the least. Leicester had been Elizabeth's lover as well as "the lover of Essex's mother and the poisoner of Essex's father, whose widow [Essex's mother] he bigamously married; he thus became the stepfather of young Essex [Elizabeth new lover]"<sup>9</sup> says Belloc. Young Essex did become Elizabeth's lover "but he was ill at ease. He talked contemptuously of the doting Queen and ridiculed her 'crooked carcase' [carcass]"<sup>10</sup>.

## (4)

It is significant that while massacres were being conducted of Muslims and Jews in Spain in the name of Catholic ardor, the rulers of Spain and France frequently sided, for political reasons, with Protestant rulers against the Pope. "Philip II of Spain had even tried to get the Papacy itself to accept Cecil's [i.e., England's] newly established English Liturgy" (ibid). England in Elizabeth's reign, noting weakness within France and Spain, became aggressive in its policy, first by conducting piracy and then competing in colonial conquests against them. France was weak with internal strife. "Queen-Mother Catherine de Medici was engaged in a perpetual struggle against the nobles and their Protestant backing." With the French throne weakened especially with Henri II's incompetence on the throne, England's Cecil felt secure in provoking neighboring countries with piracy, what England called "privateering".

Spain was incompetent now after the holocaust against the Muslims and Jews but richly laden with the treasures from the New World. The Netherlands were a rich possession of Spain but were in a turmoil from a Protestant revolt against Catholic Spain. Brutal attempts at suppression used by Spain included massacres and the Inquisition, only worsened the crisis. The Duke of Alva had been sent to suppress the Calvinists in the Netherlands, and when Spanish ships were sent with large sums of money to pay Alva's troops and for other expenditures, Philip II Spain foolishly requested England's Elizabeth (his cousin and sister-in-law) to give those booty-laden ships safe journey. Instead Elizabeth's government stole the ships and the booty.

In England, Catholic priests still plotted a return to Catholicism in England. Some were caught and executed. After 1571 it was treason to hear even a secret Catholic mass (treason of course, automatically requiring the hang-drawn-quartered method of killing). The Calvinist uprising in Netherlands against Catholic Spain's rule was now openly supported by England; a force under the Duke of Leicester was sent to aid the rebels. And England now completed the conquest of Catholic Ireland. In the previous reign it had confiscated more Irish land calling it King's County and Queen's County, on which it was "proposed to settle English owners and cultivators." In 1567 "the evil period of treacherous massacre and wholesale robbery begins...even those who had supported the English government in Ireland...were betrayed," reports Belloc<sup>11</sup>. One O'Neill and "two hundred of his chief men were asked to a feast by the English Governor and then slaughtered by their hosts. The same thing happened shortly after in Leix" (ibid) Spain sent some forces to help the Irish but they were defeated. A second Spanish force was also defeated. So now, "out of every twenty acres, nine [were] in the possession of Protestants, mostly alien...the old Celtic organization of society, in which every man had land under his chief, was destroyed"<sup>12</sup>.

By this time England was greatly experienced and skilled in piracy of foreign ships and their valuables. English pirates who shared their booty with the English Crown were not only exempt from any punishment, but employed as pirates, and received (as Francis Drake and Walter Raleigh did) knighthoods and wealth.



It is important to note that from this early era onwards, Europe, with its history of violence, was apparently conditioned to believe that taking what belonged to others by force was not even morally wrong, if you did it to share benefits with your own country. In referring to piracy in Danish waters, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (9th edition) reports, "even bishops...did not scruple to aid in taking forcible possession of the cargo — a law passed in 1521 against these policies was abrogated and publicly burned at the instance of the barons and the clergy a few years after"<sup>11</sup> Not just the barons but even the clergy wanted no law against piracy.

Philip II of Spain, however, was furious when he heard that England had stolen those money-laden ships. And now there were frequent reports of English pirates, working for the Crown, pirating Spain's treasure-laden ships from the New World. Spain had established its monopoly on trade with its new American colony. "In the hot climates of the new Spanish possessions [in the New World]...the temptation to smuggle in slaves from abroad was very great. There were, therefore, very large profits to be made against the existing international laws and sale of cargoes of slaves to the colonists. Inevitably those who went in for this smuggling and slave-trading, bringing cargoes of unfortunate blacks whom they had seized in Africa and selling them on the other side of the Atlantic, would indulge in piracy, killing and looting when the opportunity occurred. Obviously no regular Government would openly support practices of this kind, and the pirates, smugglers and slave-traders of all nations were regarded as outlaws." There were French and Dutch adventurers and pirates in this trade. Officially, they were not supported by their own governments. But the English pirates were. "To these [French and Dutch adventurers and pirates] were added certain English adventurers of the same sort, but there was this difference between them — that the English adventurers were not drawn from any body of the population openly in rebellion against their own Government" says Belloc<sup>12</sup>. Translation: these pirates were not outlaws in England because they had special ties with the English government; they served the Crown, were decorated with honors by it, in return for the stolen booty they shared with it.

When Spain complained to the English government about these lootings by its pirates and "buccaneers", "Elizabeth's Ambassador in Spain was sent to apologize for these piracies. But secretly the English government, through William Cecil, "was protecting them while openly apologizing to Spain."<sup>13</sup> When Spain discovered this duplicity, England (through Cecil) apologized again and then signed the Convention of Bristol with Spain, promising even to return the money taken from the Spanish ships five years before. The tension was eased, commercial relations were restored.

Secretly, however, English piracy continued. Now England also found Francis Drake, an expert pirate who had already completed his "apprenticeship of slave-trading, piracy and buccaneering under Hawkins" (another English pirate who worked for the English government). Drake with his "unscrupulous avarice, readiness to rob and murder, [with] vanity, and tenacity of purpose" was such an enormous success at piracy for England that he was knighted. He specialized in

piracy and looting at the Spanish possessions in the New World, and once after going "around the Horn, fell upon unsuspecting cities of the Pacific coast, looted, massacred, and sacked before resistance could be organized, fled westward across the Pacific...ultimately returned to England after three years having circumnavigated the globe for the first time since the Portuguese captain Magellan had done so nearly sixty years before. The understanding was that all the loot, which Drake seized during his piracies should be paid over to his employers, the English courtiers and the Court itself. But he was to have a small commission of 2 1/2 per cent, and the booty was so enormous that this provided him with a comfortable country gentleman's income" reports Belloc. The knighthood bestowed by Queen Elizabeth was to make him an icon "of knightly virtues" in books, movies and TV.

But, as we have noted, an angry Philip of Spain decided upon sending a fleet ("armada" in Spanish) to attack England in 1588. The attack was a disaster because of rough weather and storms led to the loss of many ships and half its force and the rest struggled home, defeated. The Catholic Church, which had passionately backed the invasion, said God was punishing Spain for allowing some Moriscos (Muslims converted to Christianity) to live, and so many more were now put to death.

Elizabeth's death "was a very unhappy one, preceded by bad nervous trouble — nightmares and evil visions. After sitting silent on the floor propped up, with her finger in her mouth, staring, she died in the early hours of Friday, March 24, 1603" reports Belloc (ibid).

James, son of the executed Mary, Queen of Scots, succeeded Elizabeth as James I of England and James IV of Scotland. There had been the usual rivalry among claimants. James I soon settled the claims of his cousin Arabella Stuart by putting her into the Tower, where, it was said, she went mad and died. Yet another Catholic conspiracy was now revealed, with Walter Raleigh as ringleader. He was arrested and sentenced to death, but he was not put to death. Raleigh had been a popular pirate and had made a considerable fortune for the Crown with his "privateering", so King James I had delayed his execution. Now another Catholic plot, the Gunpowder Plot aimed to blow up the Houses of Parliament, was discovered by Cecil. Most of the conspirators, including Guido "Guy" Faulks, were found and killed.

By this time, England felt it was powerful enough to demand at least equal status to Spain and France, "though possessed of far less resources"<sup>16</sup>. But while "the impoverishment of the poorer people [in England] went on uninterrupted"<sup>17</sup>, the English rich were getting richer, not just from the piracy and loot, but with killing Indians and setting up colonies in the New World. The craving for a greater share in the riches of America kept growing. In Elizabeth time, a settlement called Virginia had been established in North America but the rough conditions in the wilderness had led to starvation and cannibalism among the settlers and the survivors had to be rescued. There was still a problem with taking Spanish lands, because Catholic and Protestant clergy still argued that conquering heathen lands was fine, even laudable, but not land conquered already by another Christian country from

those heathens. The Pope, in particular roundly denounced any Protestant attempt to take lands already taken by Catholics from the Indians. Such wrenching of lands from other Christian colonists had therefore to be done adroitly. A new English colony was now established north of Spanish possessions, in North America, called Jamestown, where tobacco and slave trades were established. A long strip of land on the Atlantic coast was still named Virginia. Then two new colonies at Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay in "New England" had been set up; later this was where Puritans, who came from England and Holland set up gainful trade in America. In each of these colonies, of course, the American Indians helped the Europeans, taught them to survive there (just as they had helped Columbus initially). Like Columbus had done, the immigrants used this friendship to learn, then either killed or drove the Indians from their lands. The Dutch had created their own colony at the Hudson River. And France had set up its own settlements to the north.

Sir Walter Raleigh, still under death sentence for the Gunpowder Plot, now made a deal with the English regime. He offered to go to Guiana (Guyana) where he insisted there were gold mines. Spain was already there but he could overpower them. *The death sentence was suspended to let him proceed* and he sailed for America in 1617; there, he "marched with an armed force" through the Spanish settlement of St. Thomas; he killed the governor in action and occupied the town.<sup>18</sup> He found no gold but made Spain angry furious. It threatened war if England did not punish Raleigh. So when he returned to England in 1618 Walter Raleigh was "put to death under the old sentence."<sup>19</sup>

Parliament consisted of the House of Lords, mainly comprising of titled owners of large tracts of land, and the House of Commons, comprising the "gentry" of smaller landowners and prosperous merchants. The masses occupied in agriculture, for instance, *had no representative in Parliament*. In fact, Parliament drew power mainly from its role of providing grants to the Crown. The more acute the monarch's needs, the more powerful Parliament felt.

James I died in 1625, but he had arranged for his surviving son, Charles, to marry Henrietta Maria, the French King's young sister. While Charles reportedly did not care for Catholicism, his marriage to Henrietta Maria, staunchly Catholic, create problems at court. Charles had serious problems with Parliament, who even accused him and his favorite Minister Buckingham of having poisoned his father James I. There was another war with France, and once again Parliament had to be called to grant more money. The suffering multitudes were becoming restless under abject poverty and unfair regulations. To soothe this, Parliament demanded a Petition of Rights. The King could no longer hold a man prisoner while the crime was still being investigated, the prisoner had a right to legal help, and property and goods were no long subject to tax by the Crown, though Parliament might grant that request *if it chose to do so*. Charles gave it a conditional agreement. But with these restrictions, along with insurrections in Scotland and Ireland, additional funds were constantly demanded. Eventually, Charles insisted upon his rights as Absolute Monarch; it led to a civil war, the forces of the King versus those of the Parliament.

Advised that he would lose, Charles tried to escape in disguise to France but was captured, brought to trial, found guilty and beheaded on Jan 30, 1649.

Oliver Cromwell, though of the prominent millionaire Cromwell family, was himself of moderate means. He had worked himself up from Captain to the head of the army, and with Charles' execution, Cromwell became the leader of the new Commonwealth. Charles II tried through Scottish support to gain the throne, but was defeated and had to flee to France. Cromwell "is the only one in [English] history to whom the burden of government responsibility was odious" says Belloc<sup>20</sup>. He tried to set up through the Instrument of Government, a Council of Fifteen and a House of Commons comprising *only* of those with 1,000 in sterling in land or goods (a large sum at the time). Cromwell was a Puritan, and his regime claimed to be strict Christian. *But they were not at all averse to conquests of heathen lands, and very willing to bring other Christian lands under their control*. Though the government had scarce resources, he spent heavily on the military, the army and naval strength. During Cromwell's Commonwealth regime, more massacres were conducted in Ireland, "thousands were condemned to death and thousands more sold as slaves in the West Indies" says Belloc<sup>21</sup>. Soon less than one in ten acres of Irish land were reportedly in Catholic hands. Cromwell also fought Spain for the West Indies, captured Jamaica. He tried direct rule, then even revived the House of Lords as "The Other House." Puritan Cromwell's government fiercely condemned the lax sexual freedom of the times; the bawdy houses were ordered shut down; theatrical performances were banned unless they reflected the old "morality" plays.

Cromwell changed future history when he allowed Jews to return to England. Jews had been expelled by Edward I from England (France had expelled them, too, sixteen years after Edward I did) but Cromwell not only believed in the Old Testament but reportedly also in the Jewish race as the Chosen People. Besides, Jews had by now become very prominent in Holland's financial and mercantile establishment, and soon they were to become even more so in England. But the Commonwealth government was soon to end. When Cromwell fell ill he "assured his wife and his principal doctor that he had a revelation from God promising he should *not* die...a week after this divine communication [Sept 3, 1658] he died."<sup>22</sup>

### (5)

There was great clamor for a return to monarchy and in 1660, a new Parliament assembled, voted for the Restoration and invited Charles II, son of the executed Charles I, to return from France. This return to Monarchy was, however, with very restricted powers for the monarch. *England was well on its way to becoming a plutocracy, the government by the wealthy*. Now, more than ever, the power of government was in the hands of the nobles, the great landowners, the wealthy merchants and the bankers. Parliamentary leadership, however, was still with the King's advisors, the famous "Cabal" who set the policies of government.

Charles II had lived most of his life in France, developed French tastes and a voracious appetite for good living. His court reflected the latest French styles and



sexual laxity. After Cromwell's severe Puritanical restrictions, a burst of excesses in sexual proclivities prevailed even among the masses. And therefore even Charles' own peccadilloes won him more admiration and popularity than censor. In his incalculable dalliances, some for a night and others over months, Charles II produced more illegitimate children than any recent English monarch, even Henry VIII, and his bastards (whether from the wombs of court ladies, other men's wives, actresses, serving maids or retail sellers) were to become the ancestors of many an aristocratic family of Britain.

There were no longer any "royal revenues" allowed, so all of the King's moneys had to be sanctioned by the wealthy. The wealthy now decided that if he needed more money he could sell royal lands, and that Charles should also collect more money from the entire population, not just the rich, by an excise duty on beer and wine. With his very extravagant lifestyle, Charles found, even after his marriage to the Portuguese Princess Catherine of Braganza and the large dowry she brought, urgent needs for more funds. He decided that by aligning himself (in his personal capacity) at times with fellow-monarchs of Europe wealthier than himself, he could add to his income as a broker. He wooed France in some moves, at other times the Dutch, and pocketed commissions from both.

The problem for England with the Northern Provinces of the Netherlands (now called Holland) was complex. Both were essentially plutocracies, both were seeking to use their maritime strength to conquer lands overseas. Holland, with the help of Jews who had settled there in large numbers especially after expulsion centuries back from England, had already set up a form of institutionalized banking. England was now seeking, with the Jews back in England, to use that Jewish expertise to set one up too.

A top priority for the English and Dutch governments, both run by wealthy landowners and merchants, was to seek the great fortunes of foreign conquests. The Portuguese, after Vasco de Gama had reached India in 1498, had already established colonies there and English adventurers now went there too, among them the notorious English pirate Hawkins, who had trained other pirates like Francis Drake. In fact, a part of the dowry the Portugal's Catherine of Braganza brought on her marriage to Charles II, was the island of Bombay in India. But the newly discovered treasures that Spain had grasped that were of greatest interest now to England and the Netherlands.

The forces of the three countries clashed in their overseas predatory adventures. Between the English colonies of New England and Virginia, the Dutch held the coastline on the Hudson River, which they called New Amsterdam. By now that old concern for taking heathen lands from Christians who had already conquered it, had been quietly laid to rest.<sup>7</sup> The English seized it, and called it New York, after the Lord High Admiral York. "The English merchants complained that their Asiatics had been belligerently injured by the Dutch...By 1664 the temper of the merchants was inflamed—especially in London—to a pitch which demanded war." Parliament promptly voted a large sum for a war, the king's brother James led the fleet, but the battle was indecisive.

Now came two major disasters, the Great Plague followed by the Great Fire of London. In the extremely unhygienic conditions of daily life in much of Europe, diseases became epidemic in no time at all. In England, the Plague claimed, in 1665, an estimated 170,000 lives. The Great Fire of 1666 that followed was suspected to have been deliberately set to oust the Plague; it did that, but the fire burned down most of the city. The Dutch took this opportunity to retaliate in 1667 against the English conquest of New Amsterdam; their fleet invaded London, and destroyed the royal ships there. A peace agreement was made, whereby all of the Dutch possessions around what was now New York were ceded to the English, while the English in turn made concession in the Far East to the Dutch.

The old money-lending system, which had caused so much hate towards the Jewish money-lenders in the reign of Edward I, was on its way to being turned into an official, independent, therefore respectable institution, later called The Bank of England. In the meanwhile, money continued to be deposited with goldsmiths (gradually called bankers) but only an agreed portion could be withdrawn per month. This enabled the goldsmith/banker to lend the remainder "out at usury—never less than 8 per cent and often 10 per cent. [Even] The Government had to borrow from them at such rates and this vastly increased Charles's financial burdens"<sup>8</sup> and of course upon the country. But the wealthy profited greatly, not only from their share in foreign adventures, but many also from their share of the usurious rates of interest charged in the borrowing. Gradually London was being rebuilt, with architects like Christopher Wren redesigning it on far more elegant lines than it had been.

Charles sought to ingratiate himself with the Dutch. France had claimed Flanders in the Netherlands from Spain. The Dutch, always concerned about Spain's power in the Netherlands, sided with France. England now suggested an alliance between Holland and England, and also reassured France that it wanted only to help France get its objectives. This "triangle" enabled Charles to seek a commission from both France and Holland when it became necessary. Later when France and Holland had a falling-out, Charles sought a "subsidy" from the King of France and then sought Parliament's sanction for funds for a war against Holland with France as ally. To balance that Charles married his niece Mary (James' daughter) to Holland's William of Orange.

In 1669, the Plutocrats now passed a law to make the masses of English peasants into *tenants*. Hitherto, the peasant who tilled land paid a nominal rent for a "fee-farm lease" to his overlord. This gave them a degree of security and the payment was nominal. But now he had to produce documents to *prove* his fixed lease to the land. For the illiterate mass of peasantry, this was impossible; so hereafter the farmer was on the land at the pleasure of the overlord, and required to pay whatever the overlord demanded as rent.

Charles' sister and mother had declared they were Catholic. He, too, was frequently suspected of having Catholic sympathies. And, as he had innumerable bastards but no legal child, his brother James was the heir-apparent. James was known to be at least a closet Catholic especially after he hurriedly married Ann,

daughter of Lord Clarendon, when she was pregnant with their first-born Mary. Ann was Catholic, but their daughter Mary was married to the Protestant Dutch prince. Yet when fears of Catholic revivalism were receding, James himself astounded everyone by announcing that he had converted to Catholicism.

Now Catholics tried desperately to get James crowned King. The Popish Plot (which tried to do this) was discovered, Titus Oates, a former Jesuit priest, was reported to be the leader. Jesuit priests and other Catholics were accused of planning the murder of Charles so that James would be king. Even Charles' Portuguese Queen, an ardent Catholic herself, was accused by some of being implicated, along with her many Catholic priests. "Two thousand Catholics were soon in prison."<sup>24</sup> There were many executions, including that of Oliver Plunkett, Catholic Archbishop and Primate of all Ireland.

There was a fierce movement in 1679 to exclude James from succession, a Bill to this effect passed the Commons, but Charles tried to delay matters by proroguing Parliament for the present. In retaliation, there was a strong move now to make one of Charles' bastards, the Duke of Monmouth, the heir-apparent. More plots were unearthed, one to kill Charles, the ringleader convicted for this was the very rich William Russell; Lord Belford's heir was also beheaded for it; many other "lesser conspirators were hanged at Tyburn"<sup>25</sup>

Charles died on February 2, 1685. At his deathbed, he is said to have delayed Anglican rites. Catholics insist that when his brother James brought Father Huddleston for the last sacraments, Charles accepted that because, say Catholics, he too had been a closet Catholic.

James II ascended the throne in April 1685 borrowing money from the goldsmiths as there was no revenue granted in his name. He promised Parliament he would fully support the Protestant Church, and was therefore granted revenues generously. But anger at his own professed Catholic faith had led to a strong opposition and a movement was still underway to bring the Duke of Monmouth, Charles' bastard son, to the throne. Monmouth now arrived, accused his Uncle James of having poisoned his father, of setting fire to London, of idol worship. Monmouth's forces were however defeated and he came to James "knelt and crawled upon the floor imploring mercy."<sup>26</sup> But he was beheaded. Thousands who had supported him were brought to trial before the notorious Judge Jeffries; many were beheaded.

James gingerly sought to legislate tolerance of Catholics, using his dispensing power to grant leniency or pardon. He attempted also to overturn the ban on granting degrees at Oxford and Cambridge to Catholics. Then he published what was to be known as The Declaration of Indulgence, to grant equality before the law for all creeds. There still were a minority of Catholics in the House of Lords, and he tried to use their influence to have his Declaration passed. It failed. So he tried to have it read in churches.

But while Belloc (a Catholic) stresses this religious tolerance of James II, the Catholic monarch, according to other historians, was anything but tolerant especially in Scotland. Henry Thomas Buckle in Volume Two of his "History of Civilization in

England" (Longman, 1864) reports "The reigns of Charles II and James II were but repetitions of the reigns of James I and Charles I. From 1660 to 1688, Scotland was again subjected to a tyranny, so cruel, and so exhausting, that it would have broken the energy of almost any other nation. James II, the cruellest of all the Stuarts...in 1680 assumed the direction of affairs. He...[would] derive actual enjoyment from witnessing the agonies of his fellow-creatures...James was so dead to shame, that he did not even care to conceal his horrible tastes...When James visited Scotland... [he decided] that this [a torture instrument which broke bones] was too lenient...in 1684, a new instrument was introduced, termed the thumbkins...producing pain more exquisite than any hitherto known...in 1688, as in 1642, the Scotch people and the English people united against their common oppressor, who saved himself by sudden and ignominious flight."<sup>27</sup>

By now the Protestant majority had so far tolerated James because both his daughters were married to Protestants and, as he had no male issue, one of them, probably Mary (wife of Protestant William of Orange), would take the throne. Then it was rumored that Queen Anne was pregnant. On June 10, 1688 a son was born.

William of Orange (Mary's husband) was secretly encouraged to invade with a force. William played his cards right. There was a League of Augsburg formed in 1686 to control the growing power of France; "it was an anti-French alliance, actively helped by the Pope, who feared the Gallican policy of the French King, and originally including the Catholic King of Spain and the Catholic Emperor"<sup>28</sup> Note that the French regime was Catholic! Without disturbing this alliance, William claimed he was not attempting to overthrow his father-in-law in England. Louis of France was convinced he was, and publicly offered to aid James if this happened. However, James rejected Louis' offer as unbefitting the monarch of an independent country (England). Insulted Louis ignored the subsequent "bloodless revolution", when William did invade England in December 1688 and while there was some resistance to this takeover by a "foreigner", there was far greater support for William among the powerful. James was taken prisoner by Dutch soldiers. In the early hours of December 17, he escaped and fled to France.

(6)

Monarchy with limited powers was now constrained more than ever before. England from this point on was a Plutocracy in the truest sense, ruled by Money, rather than an Aristocratic Oligarchy it had been. Even during Charles II and James I's era, money-lending was becoming a critical part not just of the English economy but also of its foreign adventures; without capital, piracy and subsequent colonial rule could not have been undertaken. "From James I's mid-reign onward continual indebtedness to goldsmiths, who later became bankers — indebtedness at 8 per cent and more — sucked dry the veins of monarchy till it perished [i.e., in the real sense]"<sup>29</sup>. While the Aristocracy still ruled, it could do so only with the growing power of the Bankers behind them. The Bankers could direct the Aristocracy



when they wished. Jesus might have denounced usury but this was England, where money was very, very important. It was the same all over Christian Europe.

Usury and "borrowing from the future" became an entirely respectable institution in 1694 when The Bank of England was created by a special charter. Now it was not some sleazy money-lending operation, but a respected, independent corporation. It set its own policies. The Government had to borrow from it just like other customers. Paper money had existed in China for centuries. Now the Bank of England was granted the privilege of printing paper money. The Government had to honor these promissory notes at all times, at face value.

There were three immediate results from this development. First, *it discouraged a major mass revolution*, as the overthrow of the Government would cause even the little paper money held by the multitudes to be in jeopardy; secondly with a growing National Debt from foreign adventures, and the usurious rates charged to it on its borrowing, *the Government could justifiably raise taxes on all of its subject*. And third, because the Bank was independent of the Government, in fact its creditor, *it controlled the Government more than ever before*.

But England, even after it had absorbed Scotland (in 1707), Ireland and Wales, was not a rich country. What was to be the United Kingdom had very limited *natural*, valuable resources. Most of the wealth it had was concentrated in the hands of a few, and they saw the potential to become richer readily available if the UK could subjugate other, richer far-off lands. Now that England had established its own Protestant Church, which was subservient to the monarch, the *national* interest and obedience was expected to be uppermost in the minds of most of the clerics as the monarch appointed them to the Church of England. Therefore the Church, from now on, offered little resistance. The Protestant Church expressed itself happy at the successes of the nation (now the United Kingdom) in its colonial adventures overseas, but added that it was not for the wealth this brought to the UK but a chance to convert those millions of heathens to Christianity. "*Patriotism...the religion of the English*" now had a new meaning.

The same ideas were germinating in Catholic and Protestant lands all across Europe. Perhaps as proof that they were as Christian as the Papacy, Protestant founders like Luther and Calvin had been as fiercely hostile to Islam as the Popes. The conquest and colonizing of all heathen lands, Muslim lands and others, were also seen by these Churches as a Christian duty. It brought the Churches and the secular lords much closer as well.

Christian countries that were under the control of one central authority had an advantage in colonizing as they could make decisions faster. Germany and Italy were not countries as yet but principalities. England (even after it became the United Kingdom) while poorer than France, Spain and Holland at this stage, had a distinct advantage in having spent much of its wealth on developing a strong maritime force and its considerable experience in piracy. In addition to the vast colonies it conquered, the UK soon found ways to ensure it had not really lost that vast continent of riches that fought and won independence and now called the United States of America. In fact, England was soon able to gain great advantage,

after the independent United States spread itself "from sea to shining sea." It was the land of the proletariat, now very rich and yearning more than ever for social status among the "superior" English classes. England was to become an expert in how to exploit this social climbing craving among Americans.

### (7)

Usually, popular Western historians and their text books glide past details about the conditions of life for the masses during past three centuries, while American movies and TV follow their standard lucrative policy of replacing truth with glorified whitewash. Commercial media claimed from the start that this whitewash was "patriotism" when in fact it was *exploitation of public sentiments used for profit*. *Genuine patriotism would have required that truth in history be recognized, wars and all, to learn from the past, but that would have been less profitable to the purveyors*. In reality, the first migrants to America were masses in servitude, living in extremely primitive conditions. Parliament discussed why it was essential to create the first London Company of Virginia in 1606. Setting up colonies in the wilderness of America would reduce the nuisance of those masses of English poor: "to rid our multitudes such as lie at home pestering the land with pestilence and penury and infecting one another with vice and villainy."

Other than London, England had no towns; those called towns "were no bigger than villages...they had little intercourse with the outside world"<sup>10</sup>. They had grown "around the castle of a feudal lord or around the monastery" or "around market centres...the streets were extremely dark and narrow, with the jutting stories of houses on opposite sides of the road almost meeting...The townspeople were not much better than serfs" (ibid).

Prof. Draper is a unique Victorian who provides, as usual, some truthful details. "At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the [British] island was far more backward than its commonly supposed...in every village there were stocks for the punishment of 'valiant beggars' as they were termed. By the act of 1531, 'vagrants whole and mighty in body' caught begging for the first time might be whipped at the cart-tail; the second time their ears were to be slit; by the act of 1536, if caught the third time they were to be put to death" reports Draper (p. 234). Across the country "men were unsettled by the rumors or realities of immense fortunes rapidly gained through foreign adventure. *Maritime enterprise was...destroying its spirit, substituting self-interest for loyalty. A nation so illiterate that many of its peers in Parliament would neither read or write...* there were incessant complaints against the clergy for their scandalous lusts, for personal impurities such as in modern times [note that "modern" to Draper is the Victorian era] we do not allude to, for their holding livings in plurality, for the extortion of exorbitant profits, and neglect in the discharge of their duty... it was openly asserted that there were one hundred thousand women in England made dissolute by the clergy. It was well known that brothels were kept in London for their [clergy's] use. It was affirmed that the confessional was shamefully abused, and, through it, advantages taken of females,

that the vilest crime in an ecclesiastic might be commuted for money, six shillings and eightpence being sufficient in the case of mortal sin."<sup>31</sup> The masses had no power to complain. Finally, fearing riots, the House of Commons had to petition Henry VIII in 1529 about a great number of excesses committed by the clergy "from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the lowest priest"<sup>32</sup>

"For a long time London had been the most populous capital in Europe; yet it was dirty, ill built, without sanitary provisions...much of the country was still heath, swamp, warren...wild animals roamed here and there...nothing more striking shows the social condition than the provisions for locomotion [i.e., transportation]. In the rainy season, the roads were all but impassable. Through such gullies, half filled with mud, carriages were dragged, often by oxen... It was no uncommon thing for persons to lose their way, and have to spend the night in the [open] air."<sup>33</sup> Religion was in some confusion. A certain "Lewis Muggleton had given himself out as the last and the greatest of the prophets...It had been revealed to him that God is only six feet high, and the sun only four miles off. The country beyond the Trent was still in a state of barbarism, and near the sources of the Tyne [river] there were people scarcely less savage than American Indians, their 'half-naked women chanting a wild measure, while the men, with brandished dirks, danced a war-dance.'" Officially, Christianity had replaced the old pagan rites, but many of those rites had been brought along. There was just a vague understanding of the differences between Catholicism and Protestantism. What the overlord and the nearest Church said must be true.

Literacy was virtually non-existent, *at all levels of society*. In fact, even after the Reformation and Renaissance had led to a burst of education in Europe, England was slow to catch up. "At the beginning of the eighteenth century there were thirty-four counties without a printer. The only press in England north of the Trent was at York. There were virtually no libraries. 'An esquire [country lord] passed for a great scholar if 'Hudibras', 'Baker's Chronicle', 'Tarleton's Jest's' and the 'Seven Champions of Christendom' lay in his hall-window...very few men knew how to write correctly or even intelligibly"<sup>34</sup>

"The master whipped his apprentice, the pedagogue his scholar, the husband his wife. Public punishments partook of the general brutality...when women were fastened by the legs in the stocks at the market-place...[at public lashings] a clamour not infrequently arising [from the crowd] unless the lash was laid on hard enough 'to make him howl'...Such a hardening of heart was in no little degree promoted by the atrocious punishments of state offenders; thus after the decapitation of Montrose and Argyle, their heads decorated the top of the Tollbooth; and gentlemen, after the rising of Monmouth, were admonished to be careful of their ways, by hanging in chains to their park gate the corpse to rot in the air" reports Draper<sup>35</sup>. In fact it became a tradition to hang the decapitated heads in public places of those beheaded, and let the ravens pick at the remains until they were gone. Oliver Cromwell was to have his body dug up, the skeleton mutilated and the skull hung on a pike outside the Tower of London.

The heads of those beheaded were used to deter others. "In London, the crazy old bridge over the Thames was decorated with grinning and mouldering faces of criminals, under an idea that these ghastly spectacles would fortify the common people in their resolve to act according to the law...In the troubles connected with the Monmouth rising,[of 1685], in one county alone, Somersetshire, two hundred and thirty-three persons were hanged, drawn and quartered, to say nothing of military executions, for the soldiers amused themselves by hanging a culprit for every toast they drank...Women...for using idle words were sentenced to be whipped at the cart's-tail through every market town in Dorset; a lad named Tutching was sentenced to be flogged once a fortnight for seven years. Eight hundred and forty-one human beings judicially condemned to transportation to the West Indian islands...One-fifth of them were thrown overboard to the sharks before they reached their destination, and the rest obliged to be fattened before they could be offered in the market to the Jamaica planters. The court ladies, and even the Queen of England herself, were so utterly forgetful of womanly mercy and common humanity as to join in this infernal traffic. That princess requested that a hundred of the convicts should be given to her. 'The profit which she cleared on the cargo, after making a large allowance for those who died of hunger and fever during the passage, cannot be estimated at less than a thousand guineas.'"<sup>36</sup> We should remember that this unfortunate "cargo" was *white British men and women*.

"The houses of the rural population were huts with straw-thatch; their inmates, if able to procure fresh meat once a week, were considered to be in prosperous circumstances. *One-half of the families in England could hardly do that*. Children six years old were not infrequently set to labor...In London the houses were mostly of wood and plaster, the streets filthy beyond expression. After nightfall a passenger went at his peril, for chamber windows were opened and sloop-pails unceremoniously emptied down. There were no lamps in the streets until Master Heming established his public lanterns. As a necessary consequence, there were plenty of shoplifters, highwaymen, and burglars." (ibid)

There is no records of major calamities, other than estimates of deaths; the Black Plague (in the reigns of the early Edwards), and other Plagues were recorded (such as that at the time of Henry VIII), the Great Plague and the Great Fire (during Charles II's regime). There were many smaller epidemics in between. There was no hygiene, bathing was unknown, even washing was suspect as leading to awful consequences. England's climate was cold and moist. Protection from the forces of nature were primitive. Washing in water in any form was considered very unpleasant; hence the age-old tradition of superstition against cleanliness. This was not just among the poor, but even the rich, the aristocrats. Bathing was looked upon all over Europe (away from the Mediterranean) as a terrible practice introduced in Spain by those awful Muslim devils; as we have seen, one of the "reforms" introduced while Muslims were being forcibly converted to Christianity during the Inquisition was to close all bathing houses, and to forbid bathing.



As a consequence, with layers of dirt and grime building upon the body and face, perfumes and powders (to cover the stench) had become very popular very early among the aristocrats and in the courts of the monarchs. Powdered wigs were also essential to cover the grime and the lice in the hair for these upper classes. In these circumstances, when it came to the masses, conditions of everyday life were very hazardous, not merely because they survived at the whims of their overlords but because the diseases which attacked them constantly.

So in England, as in all Europe, the masses had one critical objective each day, far more critical than any other: survival. Medical services were unknown except for primitive and superstitious remedies. Even in London, the most gruesome forms of remedies were common. Live leeches were applied to cure wounds, body parts were cut by barbers in "surgery." Barbers and "surgeons" were synonymous for a long time. During the Spanish Inquisition, many of the Jews and a few of the Muslims who escaped to Northern Europe became the most sought-after doctors for the royalty and the aristocracy, and, when European universities and hospitals were started, they were the teachers.

Scotland was even more primitive in many ways, though furiously independent until the English subdued and conquered it. "Until the seventeenth century, no glass was manufactured in Scotland, neither was any soap made there. Even the higher class of citizens would have deemed windows absurd in their wretched abodes, and as they were alike filthy in their persons as in their houses, the demand for soap was too small to induce any one to attempt its manufacture...In 1650, it was stated of the Scotch, that 'many of their women are so slutish, that they do not wash their linen above once a month, nor their hands and faces about once a year,'" (reports Buckles, quoting Whitelock's memorials, p. 486, London 1732, folio). Finally we have positive proof that "in some parts of Scotland, even at the end of the eighteenth century, the people used, instead of soap, a substitute too disgusting to mention (Sinclair's Statistical Account of Scotland)"<sup>37</sup>; "The ordinary country-houses are pitiful cots, built of stone and covered with turves, having in them but one room, many of them no chimneys, the windows very small holes" [Ray's Itineraries, p. 153, 1846 London].

"The nobles, when they were not making war upon the enemy, occupied themselves in cutting each other throats, and stealing each other's cattle. Such was their ignorance, that, even late in the fourteenth century, there is said to be no instance of a Scotch baron being able to sign his own name" [Buckle's source here is Tyler's *History of Scotland*]. England was to officially absorb Scotland in 1707.

## Chapter 11

# The Renaissance and the Counter-Revolution

(1)

Muslim influence had extended for a considerable time beyond Spain and Sicily. Emperor Frederick had sought it, encouraged it. Muslim and Jewish learning had reached Christian southern Europe in particular, not only by their presence over the past centuries but through the many Christian students who had studied at Muslim schools and universities in Spain before the extinction of the Muslims in Spain. *Even Popes like Sylvester II and Gregory VII had been students of the Muslims in Spain, studied Arabic in pursuit of that higher education.* Most importantly the Crusading adventures from the 11th century onwards had provided enormous education to Europeans in the hundreds of thousands each time.

Muslim Spain was a great deal more advanced than the rest of Europe not only in all branches of learning, in the sciences, the arts and literature and but in lifestyle too. In Muslim Cordova, Spain city life was so advanced by 900 AD that "after sunset a man might walk through it [Cordova] in a straight line for ten miles by the light of the public lamps. Seven hundred years after this time there was no so much as one public lamp in London. Its [Cordova's] streets were solidly paved. In Paris, centuries subsequently, whoever stepped over his threshold on a rainy day, stepped up to his ankles in mud," says Draper, and adds "Religiously cleanly, the Muslims changed their undergarments daily, unlike the rest of Europe who wore a garment unchanged until it dropped to pieces of itself, a loathsome mass and rags." (Vol. II p.30-31, 33)<sup>1</sup>

Greece was never considered part of "Europe." In fact Constantine took his capital to its outskirts, for political reasons, in order to be outside of Europe per se. But now, as Europe discovered the ancient Greeks through the Muslims, Europeans grabbed ancient "pagan" Greece as European. Otherwise how could they claim a

"Renaissance", a re-birth of learning when there had been no learning in early Rome and the Church had not only condemned as "pagan" but had actively destroyed Greek temples and books?

In the sixteenth century, which Western historians identify as the "Renaissance", Greek Thought as well as all the knowledge acquired in the Muslim world in the past, inspired southern Europe. That thirst then moved to northern Europe. Released from the Church of Rome's past shackles on freedom of thought, with the Protestant movement forcing the Catholic Church to reform, literacy and secular knowledge no longer associated with the devil. Christendom now using the head-start given by the Muslims and the Jews and Europe was to reach remarkable heights in creativity, from this point onwards, using the wealth it acquired through colonialism and its own creation: the Industrial Revolution.

When the Church had finally permitted classical learning in Christian Europe, it placed one strict condition. *It ordered that Muslims should never get any credit for teaching it.* The names of Muslim authors were changed (e.g. Ibn Rusd to Averroes and Ibn Sina to Avesina) and no credit (except vaguely) was ever to be given to Muslim pioneers of learning: "Thus Innocent III AD 1215, regulated by his legate, the schools of Paris, permitting the study of the Dialectics of Aristotle but forbidding his physical and metaphysical works and their commentaries. *These had come through an Arabic channel.* A re-script of Gregory XI AD 1231, interdicts those on natural philosophy until they have been purified by the theologians of the Church. These regulations were confirmed by Clement IV AD 1265" says Draper.<sup>2</sup>

Soon, it became a "tradition" never to give credit to Muslims for all that had been learnt from them, whether it was in clean living, in medicine, in arts, in literature. In future years, even Muslims educated Western institutions, were surprised if they learnt how much of the West's "advanced living" had originated in the East. In Holland, a test in 1989 among college students revealed the fact that not one student knew that not only tulips but the windmill as a source of energy had been brought from the Middle East by the Crusaders.

*The real Renaissance of Greek Thought, along with the pioneering studies in medicine and other sciences and arts had commenced centuries earlier by the Muslims in Persia, in the Abbaside capital Baghdad, in Muslim Spain, along with Jews and some Christians who lived in the Muslim world.* Muhammad himself had directed Muslims "to acquire knowledge even if it be in China"; that "It is the duty of every Muslim man and woman to acquire knowledge"; "Paradise is much for him who has rightly used his pen as he who has rightly fallen by the sword". "Within twenty-five years after the death of Mohammed, under Ali, the fourth Khalif, the patronage of learning had become a settled principle of the Mohammedan [sic] system" says Prof. Draper<sup>3</sup>. This had continued in ebbs and flows in the Muslim world, and then the thirst for research and knowledge in all fields exploded again, commencing about the late 8 century A.D. Then the Crusaders commenced to invade from 1096 onwards, the Mongols followed, Spain was conquered by Ferdinand and Isabella, the Inquisition and genocide followed there. Muslims eventually became traumatized.

(2)

The Papacy, in a panic as the Lutheran revolt, followed by that of the Calvinists, spread all over Europe, had finally recognized that unlike earlier revolts, these could not be contained. This time, serious changes were needed in Rome. "The spread of Protestantism caused the Roman Church to make a determined attempt to reform itself from within"<sup>4</sup>. This was why it launched what came to be known as the Counter Reformation. In 1540, a Spanish priest, Ignatius d' Loyola had founded the Order of Jesus, the Society of Jesus. Officially confirmed by a Bull that year by Pope Paul III, the Jesuits vowed to poverty, chastity, obedience to the Church and willingness to go wherever they were sent. The Papacy had always frowned upon secular learning. This was changed. In time, the Jesuits were to become renowned in education, setting up schools and universities; they spread across Europe and around the world, teaching but always mindful of their primary duty: the spread of Christianity, conversion of the Protestants back to Catholicism, and conversion of non-Christians to Catholic Christianity. The over-riding rule for the Jesuit from the start was the Doctrine they were sworn to follow: "This doctrine [even] attempted to justify sin if the end aimed at is laudable, and there is no doubt that during the great religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries some Jesuits definitely encouraged the assassination of Protestant sovereigns"<sup>5</sup>. And, "they boasted that they were the links between religious opinion and literature. With implicit and unquestioning obedience to his superior, like a good soldier, it was the paramount duty of the Jesuit to obey his orders, whatever those orders might be...to resort to justifiable means if they should appear sufficient, if not, to unjustifiable means; to the spiritual weapon, but also to be prepared with the carnal; to sacrifice candor if the occasion should require, if necessary even truth, remembering that the end justifies the means, if that end is the good of the Church...With the Indies, East and West, they carried forward extensive commercial undertakings and had depots in various parts of Europe. In these operations they were necessarily absolved from their vows of poverty and became immensely rich... Men found, by bitter experience, that within the silken glove there was an iron hand. From their general in Rome [the Pope] who was absolute commander of their persons and unchallenged administrator of their prodigious wealth, down to the humblest missionary [in Europe or in the remotest parts of the world] — wherever the Jesuit was, or whatever he was doing, men universally felt that the thing he had in hand was only auxiliary to some higher, some hidden design"<sup>6</sup>. In fact this was to result in the Jesuits being banished later even from the most fiercely Catholic countries like France, Portugal, even Spain, and in 1773, they were actually abolished by a Papal Bull. But then they were restored. It must, however, be added that whatever hidden agenda they may have been instructed to follow, there were to be, in later years, at least a few truly pious, even saintly Jesuits, who devoted their lives to humankind. And, in fairness, it should be noted that the educational facilities they provided to both the Haves and the Have-nots of the world were considerable over future centuries. Of course with such opportunities,



they implanted grotesque distortions of history and facts in young minds and left there to germinate throughout their lives.

"Rome [Papacy], awakening at last to her danger, met the Reformation with four weapons — the counter-revolution, an increased vigor in the Inquisition, the institution of the Jesuits, and a greater embellishment [more elaborate, appealing] of worship". Ferocious Inquisitors killed dissenters and banished others. Alongside these brutalities, there was finally one worthwhile reform: the cleansing of the Papacy itself. "Henceforth it was her [Roman Church's] intention that in the chair of St. Peter should never again be seen atheists, prisoners, thieves, murderers, blasphemers, adulterers."

## (3)

We have examined, earlier, a few representative examples of papal degeneracy. But we must examine one more that was to play havoc with the lives of hundreds of millions of people in future generations around the world.

Most of visual media of the future, that most lethal weapon handed over to commercial interests, was to establish, in its own version of "history", that Lucretia Borgia married and poisoned a series of husbands. What is omitted in this version is that her father Pope Alexander VI (pope from 1498-1503) and her brother Cardinal Caesar Borgia, terrorized her and both (according to serious historians) committed incest with her, selected the husbands she should marry for money or other advantages, and then arranged, either through her or directly, for their murder. Caesar's diabolical intrigues and cunning in politics enabled him to amass a huge estate and great wealth. For this, he was much admired in some quarters and later Machiavelli, the Florentine, wrote *The Prince* in which it is Caesar Borgia's doctrine for success in life that Machiavelli provides. "It is a devastating doctrine which has been followed by many rulers and diplomats since the days of Machiavelli" admits Davies<sup>8</sup>. Prof. Draper lists some of these rules as they were to be the core of the developing colonial-crusaders' policies: (1) There are three levels of human capabilities: First, the very few who know things on their own, the second who can understand after things are explained, the third not at all. The intelligence level of the largest segment of humanity "is so simple and weak that it is very easy to dupe those who belong to it." Force can and should be applied, in one form or another upon them, "veneration, security, tranquility and happiness will follow." (2) If a Prince has a choice, he should prefer to be feared than to be loved; "he should remember that men are ungrateful, fickle, timid, dissembling and self-interested" (3) Human beings are naturally wicked (4) Enemies should be killed, not spared (5) there should be no hesitation in being evil to maintain power (5) for a ruler to act upon his word and "to act as duty dictates necessarily insures his own destruction" (6) being liberal only invites more enemies than friends (7) Newly conquered states must be ruined for safety (8) sentiment must only be used if it is beneficial to oneself (9) The "vulgar" look for the "intervention of Divine Providence" but the wise understand "the ordinary law of cause and effect."<sup>9</sup>

Machiavelli's *The Prince* became the Bible for many of Europe's "statesmen" and "diplomats", who studied it and drew their own corollaries from this doctrine, depending on their time and place. The belief that all men are naturally wicked, that it was essential to be evil to maintain power, raping conquered lands of their natural resources was a necessary safeguard as well as materially enriching, sentiment is self-defeating and above all, pragmatism, self-interest, must prevail, were all very profitable "principles" to follow as Europe leaped into colonialism of lands with great riches. It made "soul-saving" of the surviving heathens irresistible for both Church and State.

For the benefit of the masses at home, the colonialists felt the strategy followed for the First Crusade was the best for colonial expansionism as well. The obvious rationale for the home public was that it was the Christian duty to convert these heathens. But it was also vital to ingrain the belief that the foreigners were barbarians, so backward that they needed civilizing by the colonialists. Therefore, even when news about some methods used leaked out, which might trouble some of the masses at home, there was that Jesuit rationale soon made into Christendom's principle, i.e., The End Justifies The Means. It worked so well, with experience and improving skills, that very soon the masses in Europe who were already taught and believed that Islam was some devilish gruesome religion, were now convinced that Christian Europe had always been the advanced society in the world, and the Muslim world, was always ignorant and backward. Even those who know the truth felt this was how one protected one's own self-interest, the best course to take. Machiavelli prevailed increasingly over the teachings of Jesus from now on.

## (4)

When the Church now allowed the study of some Greek Thought, both Catholic and Protestant Church were in complete agreement about one strict rule: *While books written by Muslim scholars in philosophy, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, even hygiene, had to be used in the emerging European schools and universities, there must be a conscious, determined effort to reduce, if not entirely obliterate, any credit to Muslims.* Even the names of Muslim scholars whose books had to be used must be Europeanized and remain ambiguous testimony for the future. Prof. Draper says that this was an important reason also for the distaste for Aristotle, in addition to the "Arab dress in which the Saracen commentators had presented him" This was that Arab thesis in Arabic had to be used to understand Aristotle, as there were no other. "Long after the time of which we are speaking [early sixteenth century], the University of Paris resisted the introduction of Greek into its course of studies, not because of any dislike to letters, but because of this obnoxious [Muslim] bearing on Latin theology."<sup>10</sup> It was not possible, despite all efforts, to remove all reference to Muslim pioneers in the Renaissance of Greek Thought. When this happened, it was contended that the Muslims had not added any interpretations, just translated them and Christian Europeans had interpreted the philosophy. When it came to discoveries and inventions, it was the same. Great

publicity was given to the "invention" of printing in Europe in 1440 when in fact, printing (albeit using crude methods) had been practiced in China for two thousand years, and had come to Europe through Muslim Spain.

As we have seen, nineteenth-century intellectuals like Prof. Draper have expressed great anger at this attempt to deny the Muslim contributions. Prof. J.J. Saunders argues strongly also against the propaganda that Muslim contribution was merely imitative, with no creative contribution. While not at all sympathetic to the religion of Islam, Prof. J.J. Saunders says (in *A History of Medieval Islam*) "In 793 [A.D.] a paper manufactory was set up in Baghdad... Baghdad became a greater Ctesiphon, the capital not simply of a State but of a world civilization... the Caliph Ma'mun, the son of a Persian mother, founded and endowed as a centre of research the Baït al-Hikma, or House of Wisdom, which was at once a library, an observatory and a science academy... by 900 the science of medicine had been assiduously cultivated by Muslims all over Islam (sic). Razi was the first of their faith to acquire world fame through his vast medical encyclopedia, the *Hawai* [best known under its Latin title *Cortines*]. A similar work by Avesina [Ibn Sina], the Canon, attained even greater celebrity and was treated for centuries as a kind of medical Bible. The branch of science most successfully investigated was ophthalmology... and the Optics of Ibn al-Haitham, court physician to the Fatimids in Cairo, where he died in 1039, remained the standard authority on the subject till early modern times... In Muslim medical schools the curricula included instructions in physics, chemistry and botany as well as in anatomy and pathology, and it was in this field that the Arab writers made their greatest contribution to human knowledge. They added substantially to the achievements of the Greeks in the theory and art of healing disease; they founded hospitals and invented new drugs, and they filled libraries of books with detailed and accurate clinical observations. Their long superiority is proved by the fact that most of the Arab works translated into Latin in the twelve and thirteenth century were medical writings and that these were among the first to be printed at the time of the Renaissance. Razi, Ibn Sina and Ibn al-Haitham in their Latinized form continued to be 'set books' in the medical schools of Europe till as late as the mid-seventeenth century... that the Arabic culture was merely imitative, that it copied and transmitted what it learnt at second-hand from the Greeks, and lacked the ability to strike out on independent lines on its own, is a judgment no longer accepted. It certainly borrowed freely from the Greeks - so did the West later - but what it built on these foundations was truly original and creative, and one of the great achievements of the human spirit. For more than four hundred years, the most fruitful work in mathematics, astronomy, botany, chemistry, medicine, history and geography, was produced in the world of Islam."

It should be added in fairness that the Renaissance in Greek Thought had already been known to a few Christian scholars, even before the arrival of Muslims and Jews who escaped from Spain and came to what is now Italy. With the Turkish advance into Constantinople in the sixteenth century, some Greek scholars had established themselves in Italy and France. Europeans of the upper classes

who were literate, used French and studied Latin too. When Geoffrey Chaucer, more French than English, wrote *The Canterbury Tales*, it was the first major literary work in English (Old English) towards the end of the 14th century. Printing spread across Europe in 1440 AD. "It is not material... whether we should attribute it to Coster of Haarlaem or Gutenberg of Mentz, or whether, in reality, it was introduced by the Venetians from China, where it had been practiced for nearly two thousand years. Coster is supposed to have printed the 'Speculum Humanae Salvationis' about 1440, and Gutenberg and Faust the Mentz Bible without date, 1445... Printing processes of various kinds were well enough known [before this time]. The real difficulty was the want of paper. That substance was first made in Europe by the Spanish Moors" writes the honest Prof. Draper.<sup>11</sup>

Printing led to an extraordinary surge in communication of thought, in the very lively era of the Reformation and the Renaissance. It was in Southern Europe that the influence of Muslim, Jewish and Greek scholars was most pronounced initially. "Venice therefore took the lead. England was in a very backward state. This conclusion is confirmed by many other circumstances, which justify the statement that Italy was as far advanced intellectually in 1400 as England in 1500. Paris exhibits a superiority six fold over London, and in the next ten years the disproportion became even more remarkable, for in Paris four hundred and thirty editions were printed, in London only twenty-six. The light of learning became feeble by distance from its Italian focus. As late as 1550, a complete century after the establishment of the art, but seven works had been printed in Scotland, and among them not a single classic."<sup>12</sup> After spoken Celtic and Scandinavian sagas and pagan tales, rewritten by priests into Christian tales in between their "histories" based on folklore, England now had already had the occasional literary like Geoffrey Chaucer, who towards the end of his life moved from Latin and French to write in Old English; now there was the remarkable Francis Bacon alongside the Elizabethan and Restoration poets and their amazing talents in the English explosion of new drama and poetry.

Theater had been the center of life for England and all of Europe all through the years of mass illiteracy. The Church saw these miracle and morality plays as a good means of education, even though that "education" was often built on a ridiculous mish-mash of facts and fiction. The Devil was with horns, tail and cloven hoofs. Angels and saints in heaven sat on clouds and played harps. Not only was history often made up to suit the plot, but even the chronology of events were changed to suit Church objectives. "In the play of the 'Shepherds' there is provision for green cheese and Halton ale... Herod swears by Mohammed, and promises one of his counsellors to make him [Mohammed] pope [in keeping with the mythical "history" which said Mohammed had been a cardinal who started his own religion because he was not allowed to become pope!]; Noah's wife... swears by the Virgin Mary"<sup>13</sup>. At the other end were the bawdy performances in the taverns. But then came the theatrical performances for the entertainment of the royalty and the aristocracies, and it was this patronage that we get the incredible talent of some of the Elizabethan and Restoration playwrights. Was there truly a



William Shakespeare with such incredible talent, despite his semi-literacy and village background, with no proper birth or death records, or was it Francis Bacon or an aristocrat, too ashamed to put his name to what was seen at the time as a seamy profession? Was it the well-educated and immensely talented Christopher Marlow bursting with creativity after he was supposed to have died in a drunken tavern brawl? Today, we cannot be sure if the original Shakespearean plays are exactly the same as those we have today, after intermediaries like Nicholas Rowe had edited the First Folio more than a hundred years later. In the final analysis, what is really important is that the works of "Shakespeare", plays and sonnets, are a magnificent milestone in the use of language, in sheer beauty of cadence and thought, and along with other brilliant talents of the Elizabethan age, caused the English language to leap into respectability alongside the older languages. Other forms of art exploded. With icons now a part of Catholic worship, sacred art had attracted many great artists even before the Renaissance. Now, with increased "embellishment" in services, music gained even greater prominence as the Church sought to widen its appeal by these means. Music now evolved outside the Church into greater creativity across Europe and was later to reach magnificent heights in what came to be called classical compositions.

In the past, there had been Popes who had claimed the personal right to art, while banning art for public consumption. This was eased considerably now. Italy became alive with artistic fervor, with painters, sculptures, poets, architects. Venice, the most prosperous city in Italy with its deep ties to the Middle East "was hardly an Italian city at all"<sup>14</sup>; in fact "many of its buildings [including the famous St. Marks] were distinctly Oriental in character" had led in the burst of creativity in many ways. Florence was transformed into new beauty with Leonardo de Vinci, Verrocchio, Botticelli and Michelangelo. The basilica of St. Peter's in Rome after the devastation of recent wars was torn down in 1450 and rebuilt (though not completed for nearly two hundred years) and in the process used the architectural genius of the likes of Bramante, Raphael, and Bernini's architectural and sculptural talents were on display everywhere. Michelangelo was offered forgiveness by the Pope for his sins of stealing corpses (to learn of the human anatomy), if he painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. And it is significant that while the fresco he painted there is a remarkable piece of work, the Pietas which he sculpted out of *personal* emotions convey just that extra bit of *sincere* beauty. From painter Fra Filippo Lippi to poets Boccaccio and Petrararch, and perhaps more than any other single individual, Leonardo de Vinci, that Renaissance man himself, they represented the fire of inventiveness of the new era. "Beauty is truth, truth beauty" John Keats said in the nineteenth century, and this summarized even the earlier explosion in southern Europe with a new reverence for the physical and the philosophic message in ancient Greek art and thought. In Elizabethan and Restoration England, while drunken debauchery in personal lives was apparently common for the poets and playwrights, Art itself was to some degree also tarnished as "Loyalty to Elizabeth became an article of faith; pride and delight in their country's past the *religious* creed," as Compton McKenzie puts it.<sup>15</sup> There was no moral consistency, despite

the pious claims; John Dryden, the English Restoration poet and playwright immortalized *Caesar Borgia* (with Nat Lee) while Italian Dante, in keeping with Vatican teaching, showered contempt on Islam and Muslims as backward even as he ignorantly quotes *Muslim* scholars in the *Divine Comedy* as teachers, assuming that they are European Christians!

It was not just thirst for popularity and fame that guided many creative talents of Renaissance Europe to reinforce existing prejudices and celebrate chauvinism. Their very existence depended upon patrons from the aristocracies all across Europe. Hypocrisy thrived alongside a new urbanity in Europe, with the new Protestant Churches beholden to the ruler and the government of the realm, while competing, in many ways, with a reformed Church in Rome, with the Jesuit soldiers of the Papacy increasingly the teachers of secular institutions around the world, *providing much-needed education of the masses, using Muslim sources yet refusing to admit to the existence of those sources.* The Jesuits, beholden to the principle "the end justifies the means," used the simple and - as yet - crude tools of the times; they pioneered what in later years would be called image-making, public relations and advertising, which the Protestant Churches quickly emulated. Gradually the milieu created, in the era of the Reformation (Protestantism), the Counter-Reformation (Catholicism) and the Renaissance, a Europe in which the rules set by Machiavelli were studied carefully by the governments in the development of "diplomacy." The State devised its colonial adventures with the blessings of the Church to spread Christianity among the pagans and the infidels, while at home, such as in Britain, the aristocracy worked to reinforce acceptance among its uneducated and fatalistic masses of the poor the belief that Nobility, like the kings and queens of the recent past, by virtue of its birth, had a Divine Right to a superior life; that for the masses, national patriotism was the highest virtue of all; glory of the Empire and of its aristocracies made those masses, though poor, superior to those foreign "they." That was the balm for their blighted existence.

There was a tangential benefit from this aristocratic claim to nobility, in *some* ways. To justify that superior status, the aristocracy, in each succeeding generation, now sought to *prove* its innate superiority over the disgruntled masses, by practicing a superior code of conduct, superior education, *noblesse oblige*, chivalry. Its growing exposure to the Eastern monarchies and their codes of excellence helped them perfect those standards for themselves, and, in turn, set as examples for the ambitious among their own masses to attempt to imitate. Of course there were very many cases of degenerate exploitation by the aristocracies and the continued use of brutal force to keep the masses in place. And to very many aristocrats, the outward manifestation of "nobility" was all that was required of them in "society." The Crusades soon learned that while Muslim nobility often fiercely practiced a higher code, some carried it to extremes, *as leaders like Saladin did vis-à-vis* the Crusaders. Europe must never do that.

What it did want with living standards rising and being refined with each generation, with colonialism and industrialization providing huge fortunes, around Europe but especially to England, was the skilled application of Machiavellian

teachings: *ornate personal grooming, polished speech, superior mannerism could not only reduce the masses at home to subservience, but could effectively disguise chicanery under the cloak of a Gentlemanly Code until it was too late for the gullible victim overseas.* In time, *genuine* superior codes evolved in British education when the British Empire ruled the world. Those norms gave way to Americanization in recent decades.

All European countries craving to colonize the rich pagans and infidels saw the obvious advantage of partnership with the Church. With "all-Christian" Spain steadily declining into ineptitude, and Portugal having done the pioneering work in the East, England, France, Russia and Holland began colonizing the world. All the elements were right. A pliant Church desperately keen to maintain and increase its flock drew a clear line between Christianity and Islam. Islam said Jesus a great prophet of God born of Immaculate Conception, *but that had to be disqualified.* The Church emphasized that belief in him as the Son of God was all-important. *All sins would be forgiven if belief that Jesus was Son of God was firm.* Unhindered therefore by any twinge of conscience, the colonialists could plan their moves and execute them freely. Spain and Portugal had opened the doors to fabulous riches in the New and Old World, especially through the new route opened by Vasco de Gamma to the rich Far East, a very useful alternative route for all Europe. They competed fiercely and fought each other for the riches, which the Church had ruled, *belonged to them as Christians, not to the pagans.* But while Christian Europe colonized other lands vigorously, the Ottomans remained the most powerful single empire in the world. Their power had to be steadily chipped away through Machiavellian trickery.

With the rare exception, the sincere as well as the devious among Europe's rulers were as one on the necessary course of action against the Muslim world. The glorious Templars, the soldiers of the Church were sent to be the armed guard for Christianity in the holy lands. *But many of them, after living among Muslims for long periods, described them as civilized, and some even converted to Islam.* They were tried for this on their return to Europe and beheaded. There were even some of Europe's royal who were influenced by Islam. King John of England, angry at the Pope's incessant demands of money, "is said to have sent an emissary to [Muslim] Spain offering to become a Mohammedan"; Draper reports that the King of France had voiced similar sentiments during Saladin's times. Neither converted of course, but the fury King John aroused by such comments is reflected in the stories which made him a villain and Richard a glorious hero – in reality, the real-life person from whom the fictitious Robin Hood is drawn, according to serious historians, was a common criminal who stole constantly to fill *his own pockets.* But fables repeated over and over again made him an aristocrat and a great Christian who even went and did amazing things at the Crusades against the Muslim barbarians, then returned to try to regain the throne for the glorious King Richard. "Richard I, the most barbarous of our princes, was known to his contemporaries as the Lion... and the title *Coeur de Lion*... actually gave rise to a story... according to which he slew a lion in single combat. *The name gave rise to the story; the story confirmed*

*the name, and another fiction was added to that long series of falsehoods of which history mainly consisted during the Middle Ages"* writes that another honest historian of the 19th century, Dr. Henry Buckles<sup>17</sup>. What Dr. Buckles, Prof. John Draper and other honest scholars of that era, could never have dreamt is that in the 20th century such fables would be even more deeply ingrained in the minds of literate masses than they had been among the illiterate of earlier centuries.

In the Renaissance and Counter-Revolution era, there were the usual hostility and competition between Europeans; at times one or another of the European nations would attempt to seek its own gain with a superficial friendly alignment with the powerful Turks. But with the deeply embedded passions of Crusading and Greed passed down through the generations, Machiavelli now provided the methodology. Christian Europe announced it was its Christian duty to crush the Muslims as an entity, than convert ("civilize") them, if possible, but first take the precaution of taking their material treasures.

### PART III

## The Crusades in the Ottoman Age



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## Chapter 12

# The Ottoman Conquests

(1)

"Apart from a few magnificent castles and some of their blood through intermarriage, the Crusaders left little which endured [in the Muslim lands]...It has been wisely observed that the most disastrous effect of the Crusades on the Islamic heartland was Islam's retreat into isolation" says Mansfield<sup>1</sup> (*A History of the Middle East*, Viking 1991) summing up after what most historians refer to as the "last" Crusade in 1290 AD. "The tribal democracy of the early caliphs, whose power was limited by a *Majlis al-Shura* or consultative council, had generally given way to despotism" he adds (ibid)

Europe had benefited greatly, materially and culturally, from these "official" Crusades they had fought so far, while the Muslim world had suffered deeply, materially and psychologically. "Although the epoch of the Crusades ignited a genuine economic and cultural revolution in Western Europe, in the Orient these holy wars led to long centuries of decadence and obscurantism. Assaulted from all quarters, the Muslim world turned in on itself."<sup>2</sup>

The effect on Muslims of these incessant Crusades from the West and the Mongol atrocities from the East had been multidimensional, all harmful; (a) the anguished psyche, the conviction that somehow the Muslim community had strayed from Islam and was now being punished by God, led to the fierce adherence to the recently authenticated volumes of *sunnah* (sayings and traditions of the Prophet) as directed by the theologians; (b) growing disapproval towards those scholars who sought new horizons in Islam and in exploring other faiths (c) venting at least part of their anger against the Crusaders upon fellow-Muslims, especially those who followed a different school of Islamic thought, as being more worthy of the hostility and contempt of the Christian world than themselves.

Western historians of the Crusades seldom, if ever, report on the daily lot of the common people of the Muslim world through those difficult times. This is probably because they rely on Western chroniclers, who either did not consider



the feelings of the Muslim masses to be important for their purpose or because they had no access to the local citizenry. In keeping with the commitment not to use Muslim sources in this book to report on the Crusades, all that need be said here is that from the time of the First Crusade in 1096 onwards, those millions of Muslim families, including many of the pioneering scholars, all of whom had been subjected to the brutality of the Crusaders as well as the slaughter and rape of entire societies by the Mongols, the deliberate destruction of centuries of original, priceless Muslim manuscripts by these invaders, the genocide and expulsion of Muslims after seven hundred years of amazing advancement in Spain, — all of these horrors convinced many that *God would not have permitted these calamities if He did not disapprove of the way they were practicing Islam in general, and their exploration of new horizons of knowledge in particular.* The periodic invasions by ambitious new ethnics from the East seeking power only added to the existing horrors of foreign invasions from the West. The fact that the progeny of these Mongol invaders gradually converted to Islam was the ultimate irony.

Ironically, less than seventy years after destroying Persia, its people, its monuments of ancient heritage, and the irreplaceable works of Muslim scholars in its libraries, after devastating Baghdad and removing the Abbasid caliphate, most of the new generation of the Mongols became Muslims. Many turned genuinely pious and sought to undo the great harm done by their ancestors. Most encouraged cultural pursuits. But some were convinced that the old pliant attitude of the likes of Saladin, in seeking approval of "the people of the Book" had been proven the wrong policy time and time again. *The descendants of the Mongols knew all too well the overtures and invitations from the Popes and Christian Europe to their ancestors to join in the massacre of the Muslim world. They were convinced that Christian Europe, like their own ancestors, understood and respected only one thing: violence.*

Some of the Tartar and Turkish tribes who had now become Muslims continued to use their military acumen to maintain their rule of the Muslim world, as well. The Mamluk slaves and guards brought in by the Abbasid caliphs garnered enough power to seize control of Egypt. They were to rule it for three hundred years. However, they too had learnt to respect Muslim civilization and its literary and artistic achievements from Persia to Cairo, Damascus to Aleppo. But tumultuous internal strife did not end. One Mamluk ruler remained in power until another stronger rival overthrew him. In the meanwhile, the Turkoman warriors of the Seljuk armies were constantly at war with the Byzantines. Each side in turn sought to invade the others' lands when it had a chance. The massive destruction and rape of Constantinople by the Europe's own Fourth Crusaders had greatly weakened their fellow-Christians' Byzantine rule, and this enabled the Seljuks to push farther into the tottering Byzantine Empire, while the Byzantines also Muslim borders frequently, when the Muslims were vulnerable.

Towards the end of the thirteenth century, a new breed of warriors from the ethnic strains of the old Mongol khans had emerged as a major force in Asia Minor. Osman (or Othman), the leader of this independent group was to set up the

dynasty of the Osmanlis, or Ottomans as they came to be called in Europe. Christian Europe in general and the Serbs in particular were to distort history in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century school books so thoroughly that by the time commercial visual media's brainwash took up "history," men, women and children everywhere were convinced that the Turks invaded eastern Europe and spread Islam at the point of the sword over the peace-loving, God-fearing Christians whom they hated. The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw not only the birth of the lethal power of visual media but this lethal power concentrated in the hands of tradesmen in the US. Judeo-Christian power soon ruled world thinking.

The truth about the Turkish origin in Europe was quite different from what the Serbs and then most Christian text books taught. As we shall see, the Byzantine ruling family and those of neighboring Christian kingdoms (*and Serbs*) became not just friends but established ties through marriage with the Ottomans. In fact with each passing generation the blood of Ottoman rulers become more European than Asian. It began with Othman himself. "At the start of the fourteenth century, a fiery Christian force called the Catalans, under Roger de Flor, invited the Turks from Asia Minor to join them in their battle against the Greeks. These skirmishes in the Bosphorus region continued and then the Byzantine Grand Chancellor John Cantacuzene, seeking to establish himself as Emperor, sought the help of the Turks in the ensuing civil war. Cantacuzene triumphed with the help of the Turks and in 1346, Emperor Cantacuzene offered his daughter Theodora in marriage to Orkhan"<sup>3</sup> and the wedding followed with great pomp. In *The Ottomans: The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Empire*, (Morrow Quill, 1977) Lord John Patrick Douglas Balfour Kinross (1904-1976), a British diplomat, Secret Service veteran, Press Counselor for the British Government and a recognized British expert on the Ottoman era, while obviously keen to present Britain in the best light, admits to certain facts such as this, which are not generally understood, facts which make a mockery of the simpliminded, often deliberately misleading claims that Muslim were the invaders and Christians, the defenders of Eastern Europe. Kinross sums up the early Ottoman years this way: "Thus were the Ottoman Turks well entrenched with more than mere foothold in Europe, not as enemies but allies and indeed as relatives of Byzantium, with a Sultan who was son-in-law of one Emperor, brother-in-law to the other — and also son-in-law of the neighboring tsar of Bulgaria" writes Kinross<sup>4</sup>. When Murad I, Othman's grandson, went into eastern Europe, "he applied the principle of toleration to allow non-Muslims to become full citizens and rise to the highest offices of state, so at this very early stage establishing the character of the vast multi-lingual and multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire, which had much in common with the [old] Roman Empire" writes Peter Mansfield in *A History of the Middle East*<sup>5</sup>.

The Ottomans were to indulge in some practices which everyone (*including most Muslims in the past and today*) consider shocking, even gruesome — the creation of the Janissaries, young Christians in conquered areas, providing them with status and power to win their total loyalty to the sultan personally. Forced conversion was and has always been condemned by Islam, and the fact that later, *watching the high status and prosperity of these Janissaries, Christian and Muslim*

parents sought to get their sons into this elite group does not alter that fact. And while Kinross, like other Christian historians, is apt to editorialize his displeasure with Ghazi Muslim conquests, he admits<sup>6</sup> that "Christians themselves, in that century were often as inhumane in their treatment of others, whether Christian or infidel." In fact the Serbs employed in the Turkish armies were furious that Murad would not let them loot or rape after victories; and it was this anger which "gave Lazar, the prince of Serbia, the opportunity to stimulate Serbian resistance" against the Ottomans.<sup>7</sup>

Murad I's involvement with Bulgaria, Hungary and Macedonia was more complex than "conquest by Muslim hordes". Lord Kinross reports that three brothers, princelings of Bulgaria, fought each other and had reduced that country to a civil war before Murad became involved. To add to the chaos, the Pope had coaxed Hungary to invade Bulgaria in what he called a "Crusade" to convert the Bulgarian Orthodox Christians to Catholicism. Sisman, one of the three warring Bulgarian brothers, now formed an alliance with Murad I and invited Murad's intervention. When Murad invaded Bulgaria, the Hungarian invasion had already "resulted in the forcible conversion by Franciscan missionaries of some two hundred thousand Bulgarians from the Orthodox to the Latin rite. Their prosecution was such that many [Bulgarians] welcomed the Moslem conquest as a restoration of their freedom of worship", reports Kinross.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, the Coptic Christians welcomed Muslim rule. Ironically, the Ottomans, like Murad's son Beyazid, while often generous towards Christians, were to make no attempt to win such approval of Muslim masses in their Asian conquests, says Kinross.<sup>9</sup>

By 1366, Murad had conquered most of Southern Bulgaria, placing Prince Sisman (one of those three brothers) in charge; Sisman's daughter either married or became Murad's concubine. There were more intrigues and cross-alignments between "Muslims" and "Christians." By the time Murad had conquered Eastern Macedonia, his son had entered into an intrigue with Byzantine's Christian Emperor John's son, Andronicus, in a plan to overthrow their respective fathers. When their plot was discovered, Murad had his own son executed, but not only did he refuse to have Emperor John's son Andronicus executed, he said that Andronicus should remain heir to John's throne. John however refused to pardon Andronicus (his son) and had him imprisoned. Andronicus escaped and with forces loyal to him, imprisoned John, his father and brother Manuel. This angered Murad who had John and Manuel released, but once again forgave Andronicus, appointing him Governor of Solanika. Emperor John and Manuel were very grateful to Murad for saving them, and became the Sultan's loyal supporters, as Kinross reports disapprovingly: "Emperor John and his son Manuel fought for the Muslims against the Philadelphians; John and Manuel fought in the ranks of the Ottoman army to impose upon these fellow Christians the Muslim yoke".<sup>10</sup>

Christian and Muslim leaders formed alliances and Kinross records that it was Christians who broke them when it suited their interests. By 1335, "Murad had received confirmation of his status as heir to the Byzantine Empire from the coasts of Adriatic... This was the first of many [treaties] to be negotiated between

the Ottoman Empire and other [European] powers in the following centuries...twenty years later, both Venice and Genoa signed treaties with the Byzantine emperor, undertaking to defend him against all enemies, but specifically excluding Murad Bey and his Turks" says Kinross i.e. refused to fight against the Turks. The Genoese followed this up by a formal treaty of friendship with "the magnificent and powerful lord of lords, Moratbei [Murad I]." The Church was furious at this, which scared Genoese, so they reneged, declaring themselves "against the Turk, son of unrighteousness and evil, and enemy of the Holy Cross".<sup>11</sup>

While Murad was preparing to battle the Serbs, according to some sources, an audience was sought with Murad by Serbian Prince Lazar's son Milosh (some sources say Milosh was a Serb soldier, not Lazar's son) who said he wished to change sides. Once granted this audience, Milosh thrust a dagger into the seventy-year-old Murad and killed him. Murad lived long enough to order his son to war against the Serbs and to execute their Prince Lazar. "He [Murad] countenanced no persecution of Christians and apart from the Janissaries, enforced no conversions to Islam. The orthodox Patriarch himself testified in a letter to the Pope in 1385 that the Sultan left to his Church complete liberty of action. By such a process of assimilation did Murad sow the seeds of a multi-racial, multi-religious, multi-lingual society which was to function effectively under the rule of his successors for centuries to come... giving citizenship to foreigners, naturalizing them in its own fashion and encouraging them to use their opportunities both to their own and to their Emperor's advantage. It enabled the Sultan's Christian-born subjects, in common with the Moslem-born, to rise as first-class citizens to the highest offices of state."<sup>12</sup>

Murad's son Bayezid was proclaimed Emperor, and his first act was to avenge his father's murder by defeating the Serbs in battle at Kosovo. But he soon came to develop a friendship with Serbian Prince Lazar's other son Stephen Bulcovitz, who was now Prince, an alliance which, Kinross says, "was to endure throughout his reign." Stephen was allowed all the privileges of his father, and "Stephen in turn gave his sister Despina in marriage to Bayezid. It did not end there. Stephen also undertook to command a contingent in the Ottoman army and to furnish Serbian troops whenever and wherever Bayezid required them."<sup>13</sup>

So here was an example of truth in history, regarding the relations between the first Ottoman Sultan and the Christian rulers of Eastern Europe entirely and conveniently ignored or twisted by most Western historians. Serbian Prince Lazar's son Milosh (or a Serb soldier of that name) had murdered Ottoman Sultan Murad. Now Bayezid, Murad's son and Lazar's other son Stephen were bonded in a lifelong friendship and Stephen's sister Despina married Sultan Bayezid (some historians give the sister's name as Olivera). From the start, therefore, some of the Serb and Ottoman ruling families had intermarried and become lifelong friends.

But there were Christian princes who resented these friendships, and knew how other princes could be induced to support them, and then, when the Church's approval, launch another "Crusade". In 1396, "the largest Christian force that had ever confronted the infidel" was put together at the request of Prince Sigismund of



Hungary, but it had to wait until the Hundred Years War was over." "Knights from the nobility" of France, England, Scotland, Flanders, Lombardy Savoy, Germany, Poland, Bohemia, Italy, and Spain; "for the last time in history, the finest flower of European chivalry gathered together for a crusade as much secular as religious in impulse" says Kinross<sup>14</sup>.

When the Crusaders invaded, Beyazid apparently treated this latest Crusade with contempt and with military acumen. At first he ignored the invasion, then sent his most inferior troops to meet the Crusaders, to exhaust them. Kinross calls these Crusaders "the finest flower of European chivalry" but admits they were just as barbaric in behavior as previous Crusaders had been. This time, as before, the Crusaders moved into Serbia without much opposition, promptly took all the good wine they could find in Moravia, captured Nish, with "great slaughter of men, women and children. The Christians took pity on no one" Christian or Muslim, says Kinross. Moving into Bulgaria, they massacred the entire town of Rahova, which included not just Turks but Frank, Bulgarian and Hungarian Christians. And "for sixteen days, indulged in debauchery with the women they had captured in the process."<sup>15</sup> It bears repeating that these civilian massacres and mass rapes in Serbia and Bulgaria in this Crusade were conducted by Christian Crusaders, "the finest flower of European chivalry".

The Crusaders celebrated their initial encounter against that Ottoman force, which convinced them that they would be completely victorious over the Ottomans. They had not realized that Beyezid's had planned their initial minor victory over a weak Ottoman force to exhaust them. And so it was that when the Crusading forces finally met with the true strength of the Sultan's army, they were massacred in much the same way as they had only recently massacred Turks.

But a fiery calamity from within the Muslim world was on its way against Beyezid. Timur the Tartar was coming.

## (2)

Timur the Lame (or Timorlane), from the small Tartar tribe between Samarkand and the Himalayas, had already conquered the most powerful nine Eastern dynasties of the time, made himself ruler of Persia, Tartary (Turkistan) and India. At the end of the fourteenth century his empire extended in the East from the Great Wall of China, northwards to the steppes of Russia, South to the river Ganges, West through the Persian Gulf, Persia, Armenia to the borders of Asia Minor. The rest of the Muslim world had in the same era been conquered by the Ottomans. Now Timur the Tartar and Beyazid the Ottoman confronted each other. "Timur was impatient of an equal, and Bejazet was ignorant of a superior" says Gibbon<sup>16</sup>. Both Timur and Beyazid claimed (to the Muslim world) that they were true Muslims.

The battle was on; Beyazid's son Suleiman led a relatively small force against Timur and was soundly defeated. Timur, for some reason, elected not to press on towards the Ottoman territories. Instead, he moved south against other Muslims, to capture Aleppo, Damascus and Baghdad. He ignored Beyazid for a full year.

In 1401 Timur marched against Beyazid. The European powers now yearned to have Timur as an ally, and made overtures to him (in much the same way as they had won the friendship and partnership of the Mongols against other Muslims). Beyazid delayed his conquest of Constantinople to face Timur. Unlike the cool-headed plans he had made to defeat the European princes, he now acted rashly to confront Timur himself. Beyazid forces were soundly defeated, he was himself captured and taken prisoner. It is reported that Timur humiliated Beyazid and tortured his Serbian wife Despina in captivity. Beyazid was later released but died a year later, some sources say from a seizure, others that he committed suicide. Beyazid's son Suleiman escaped.

Timur soon overran Asia Minor. He pillaged and burnt cities, bore off young women. Gruesome details of Timur's treatment of towns he captured — like the atrocities committed by the Mongols — are provided by Major-General Glubb in "The Lost Centuries": Timur's "sack of Aleppo lasted four days. All men and children were butchered but the women were collected for the amusement of his troops. According to Glubb (quoting Ibn Taghri Birdi), they were stripped naked, even in the mosques, and were raped again and again. The streets were littered with corpses, the heads of which had been severed to be built into the usual towers of skulls."<sup>17</sup> Then he proceeded to Damascus where "he assumed his religious manner and, fingering his rosary, declared piously that he would spare Damascus 'for the sake of the Companions of the Prophet.'" Once his troops were safely within the city gates, however, the usual butchery began. All women were collected and raped in public before large crowds. Excruciating tortures were inflicted upon the inhabitants...some of them torn limb from limb...the killing, torturing and raping lasted for nineteen days."<sup>18</sup> And so that he may not be accused of only committing atrocities against Muslims, he now attacked and conquered Smyrna, the last Christian stronghold in the area, treating its inhabitants similarly. Then he pursued the surviving Ottomans into Europe. Timur is presented in history books as a Muslim leader who killed and raped. The simple fact is that he brought his barbaric tribal practices with him. He claimed to be a Muslim when it suited him. And Western history books underplay the fact that he massacred more Muslims and raped more Muslim women than any others.

After Smyrna, the same European powers who had earlier sought an alliance with Timur against the Ottomans realized that he could turn his ferocity upon Christians too. So they now welcomed the Ottomans in their midst. "They preferred the enemy they knew to the enemy they knew not. Such was the measure of the extent to which the Ottomans within two generations had rooted themselves in the Balkans, winning the tacit acceptance of its Christian populations as heirs to Byzantium"<sup>19</sup>.

Timur was furious at the switch in alignment of the Christians leaders towards the Ottomans but he did not pursue an invasion of Europe. Instead, he made Suleiman, the son of Beyazid, his vassal in charge of the Ottoman territories. The Emperor of Christian Byzantine sought Timur's good graces by offering to acknowledge Timur's sovereignty, even paid him tribute. However, Timur had apparently become very ill.

In 1403, he decided to leave Asia Minor and move to Samarkand, reportedly planning to conquer all of China instead. He died on the way.

He left behind an Ottoman Empire in disarray, chaos and anarchy. Four of Bayezid's sons competed for the throne (the Ottomans, like European royal families, competed ruthlessly). Suleiman, the eldest, emerged the victor from his seat in Adrianople in the European section of the Empire; his rival Mehmet, the youngest brother, emerged his chief rival from the Anatolian side of the empire, headquartered in Bursa; the other two brothers, Issa and Musa, each sided with one against the other. When the dust had finally settled, Suleiman was dead, Mehmet emerged victorious, enthroned in 1413 as Sultan Mehmet I. The Anatolian boys as well as the Janissaries, hailed him as "the most just and most virtuous of Ottoman princes" reports Kinross.

Mehmet I was succeeded by his son Murad II who is generally considered an enlightened ruler in his thirty years' reign. There were wars but these were "thrust continually upon him" says Kinross while he sought inner tranquility for himself and his subjects. He did once attempt to complete the conquest of Constantinople, failed, signed instead a treaty with Emperor Manuel's successor John VIII. He had to overcome a revolt led by his own brother Mustafa. Soon Hungary and Venice were seeking to increase their own control of the disintegrating Byzantine Empire. When King Sigismund of Hungary died in 1437, leaving no male heir, Murad sought to strengthen command of the territory south of the Danube, bordering Hungary. Hungary, threatened by strife within, was taken over by Ladislas III who added the Hungarian crown to his Polish one. Among those to whom Ladislas delegated power in his new vast kingdom was a Rumanian named Hunyadi or John Corvinus Huniades (whom the Turks were to nickname "Yanko")<sup>20</sup>. He became the ruler of Transylvania under Ladislas and eventually took all of Hungary. Ladislas now invaded Ottoman lands, winning several victories. Later, in defeat, he called a "Crusade" but the ruse found little support.

"Murad the man of peace, had forborne from pursuit of the crusading forces beyond the Danube. He negotiated a ten-year truce at Szeged, by which Serbia and Wallacia were effectively freed from dependence on the Ottoman Empire, while the Hungarians agreed not to cross the Danube or press claims on Bulgaria. The treaty was sworn by Ladislas on the Gospel and by Murad on the Koran" writes Kinross<sup>21</sup>.

Mehmet, heir apparent through the early deaths of his two young uncles, shocked the Ottoman establishment with his interest in Sufism. He sought a Persian sheikh. This aroused the anger of the Orthodox Grand Vizier Halil, and the Grand Mufti who had the Persian mystic caught, denounced him from the pulpit at the mosque and then had him burnt at the stake.<sup>22</sup>

In the meanwhile, Ladislas was seeking to renege on the treaty he had signed with Murad. He was instigated to do this by Cardinal Julian, the papal legate, with the rationale that *any treaty signed even upon the Bible with a Muslim was not binding on a Christian*, says Kinross. So "The treaty, signed on the Gospel, was abjured [broken] in the name of the Holy Trinity, the Virgin Mary, St. Etienne and

St. Ladislas and the aims of the crusaders sanctified to follow in the path of glory and salvation" writes Kinross<sup>23</sup>.

Ladislas' forces were mobilizing for a surprise attack on the Ottomans in 1444 AD, secure in the belief that Murad was "abroad." But Murad suddenly returned. The Christian assault was quickly repulsed, the Janissaries defeating the Christian forces virtually on their own, though they did suffer heavy losses; "Ladislas was unhorsed and put to death on the field, his head in his helmet raised upon a lance, while another lance beside it transfixing a copy of the broken treaty, to serve as a lesson in Christian perfidy for the Ottoman troops. Cardinal Julian, who had inspired it [the renege on the treaty and the invasion], took flight and was never seen again" writes Kinross<sup>24</sup>.

That same year, Murad II decided to abdicate the throne in favor of his son, Mehmet. Though denied his Sufi teacher, he had remained a spiritual man, sought the company of theologians, poets, historians; "he sought to lead the ideal life of the religious fraternity, as his Ghazi ancestors had done, studying, writing, engaging in contemplation and in dervish devotion." However two years later, he had to answer an urgent summons of imminent chaos in government, a falling out between his son Mehmet II and Grand Vizier Halil. Murad retook the reigns of government, while a disgruntled Mehmet moved to Magnesia.

Seeking peace, however, Murad was once again drawn into war. Trouble came from what Kinross calls the Byzantine "despots" seeking to overthrow their Catholic rulers. Murad sent his forces and they "reduced the Greek despots to effective vassalage and restored to power his Latin vassals, whom the Greeks had expelled." Another "Hunyadi" however was rising in Hungary. George Kastrioti, son of an Albanian Christian, had converted to Islam, renamed Iskander Beg, now elected to join Hunyadi in 1448 in an offensive *against* the Turks. Murad defeated them at Kosovo where "sixty years before his forebear Murad I had met his death."

Murad's son Mehmet in the meanwhile had become attached to a Christian slave girl named Gulbehar, who bore him a son, named Beyazid. Mehmet was suitably married later to a daughter of a Turcoman prince but she bore no offspring. So when Murad II died in 1451, Mehmet returned to become Sultan again, as Mehmet II, with the Christian concubine Gulbehar at his side, uncertain of his religious allegiance and fury in his heart. When Murad's widow (*not* Mehmet's mother, but a rare *Muslim* wife of an Ottoman sultan), arrived to pay her respects, with her son Ahmed, the infant was later found strangled and she was sent as a bride to the governor of Anatolia Ishak Pasha, once an erstwhile enemy of the new sultan Mehmet II.

However, Mehmet confirmed his father's treaties with the Venetians, Genoese, Serbs, sought other Christian European allies, but was prone to react furiously at any suspicion of plots against his rule. Fearing Byzantine plots, he decided to take Constantinople, rather than leave it a vassal state it had been. He launched an attack on May 29, 1453. Like many Western historians Kinross gets emotional about the Turk conquest of Constantinople, though he admits that "in effect, Constantinople had been lost for a century past." And it must never be forgotten that it was the



orgy of murder, rape and destruction of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusaders which had already sealed its fate long ago. Yet many European Christians now spoke and wrote of its fall as a terrible, shocking calamity. "The conquering [Turkish] army broke its ranks and the soldiery swarmed through the streets of the city in the orgy of slaughter and pillage to which custom entitled them... The fall of Constantinople struck Western Christendom with a sense of doom... In effect Constantinople had been lost for a century past; nor at this eleventh hour could its fall have, in any event, been long delayed... from the moment of his accession Mehmet II had seen himself as the heir to the classical Roman Empire and its Christian successor." Now he took the title of *Kaisar-i-Rum*, the Roman Emperor, and successor to Augustus and Constantine. In accordance with the Ottoman standard practice in conquered lands, "the Christian Church was now subordinated to the Islamic State and subjected to the payment of tribute. But in return for this its community was still to enjoy freedom of worship, and to retain its own observances and customs of it. Such was the system devised and established throughout Moslem dominions to cover the status of religious minorities."<sup>23</sup> reports Kinross.

Mehmet's interest in Greek literature and his apparent interest in studying Christianity, along with his apparent partiality for Greeks, caused many in Christendom including the Pope in Rome to try and win him to Catholic Christianity, but Mehmet II declined. He drank heavily, and apparently followed his own form of Gnosticism.

From this point on, it becomes important to be conscious of the fact that even the more responsible Western historians write, they have to cater *something* to their primary readership. Therefore one must carefully evaluate if their reporting comprises of hard facts or that *something* is added or subtracted as explanation, at each stage, to provide just that little slant to history to meet the needs of the Western market.

## Chapter 13

# Ottoman Ideology: Ghazni-Style Islam

(1)

Mehmet II reportedly combined warring and cruel characteristics with Gnostic, contemplative interests and he introduced some useful and (for his age) pioneering social reforms. Mehmet II saw himself *not* as a Muslim ruler but as "heir to the classical Roman Empire and its Christian successor...seeing himself as Khan, Ghazi and Caesar in one, a universal sovereign" says Kinross<sup>1</sup>. He built schools, set up free kitchens for the poor, public housing, free education and medical services. And he built mosques. And, when it suited him, he also converted churches to mosques. He ordered the building of a "bedestan" a large bazaar or covered market. Importantly, he encouraged what was by now a tradition in Islamic economic life, the professional or craft guilds or unions. They were "independent of the state control, they were responsible to the state by law for the execution of such commercial regulations as affected the measures, the costs of laborite margin of profit, the quality of merchandise, the prevention of fraud and profiteering." Guilds were organized according to trade, a pioneering concept which later spread throughout Europe.

(2)

In 1456, Mehmet II moved on a major campaign against Hungary. After initial defeats, he found his erstwhile opponents Hunyadi and Capistrano dead with the plague; soon the Serbian "despot" Brankovitch also died; thereafter Serbia became torn internally between pro-Hungarian and pro-Ottoman factions, leading to its annexation by Mehmet. In 1458, Mehmet II embarked on a campaign to subjugate Greece. At Corinth "he proposed an honorable surrender, without conversion to

Islam." When this was turned down, he attacked. The area was under the surviving two brothers of the last Byzantine Emperor Constantine. The two - Demetrius and Thomas - were hostile to each other in their separate domains and under the assault they both signed a treaty with Mehmet. Two years earlier he had defeated the Florentine duke who had ruled Athens and he now proceeded to display his great respect for that city, which the Ottomans called "the city of the wise" says Kinross. "He especially admired the Acropolis. He treated the Athenians magnanimously, confirming their civil liberties and exemption from taxes, but delighted them especially, following the collapse of the Latin Church, by granting privileges to the Orthodox clergy."<sup>2</sup> Soon, however, the two Praeologue brothers Demetrius and Thomas fought each other, Demetrius, who preferred Turkish rule, accusing his brother Thomas of reneging on their treaty with Mehmet. In 1460, Mehmet took over the rule of both domains.

"The Greek people were treated with reasonable tolerance—unburdened from excessive taxation, exempted from the tribute of children, permitted freedom of trade, and to elect their own local government. *Western Christendom, on the other hand, preferred to see them as a people oppressed by the infidel and yearning for liberation at the hands of the Latins*" writes Kinross. "Mehmet II may even have had Greek blood in him, from his mother"<sup>3</sup>.

Mehmet II was now convinced that the intrigues, the double-cross by allies that now followed were being deliberately provoked. He saw the hand of the Pope behind the scenes. He decided that the best way to reduce the West's influence was to confront its allies directly in the region. There was Vlad Dracul (the king of Wallachia across the Danube) whose real-life brutalities were the basis for the twentieth century's notorious creation Dracula. Mehmet had let Dracul alone, but in 1461 Vlad Dracul attempted to further the interests of the Christian world by an alliance with King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary to undermine the Ottoman territories. When Mehmet sent a contingent to bring Dracul to Istanbul to explain his arrears in payment of tribute, the entire contingent was killed and impaled at Dracul's orders. Later it was discovered that impaling corpses, Turks, Bulgarians and his own subjects, was Dracul's favorite pastime. Dracul followed this up by an invasion of Ottoman territories, ravaging and massacring the populace. The Sultan's armies defeated Dracul, sent him into exile to Moldavia and installed Dracul's brother Radu as lord of Wallachia<sup>4</sup>.

As we have seen earlier, the Bosnians had been appealing to the Ottomans to come and deliver them from Catholic and Orthodox brutalities. They had appealed to the Ottomans when Murad was sultan, but that peace-loving ascetic, as we have seen, disliked wars and preferred poetry and the pursuit of philosophy. He assumed that responding to the appeal of the Bosnians would mean warfare. But Mehmet II was different. He had his ascetic side, but was a warrior when this was essential. He went with his forces to Bosnia and found to his surprise that the Bosnians surrendered without a fight, in fact joyfully surrendered to be rid of the tyranny they had suffered for centuries. Some Western writers state that Mehmet II quite unnecessarily ordered the beheading of King Stephen Tomasevic but Sir Arthur Evans argues that Tomasevic was killed in battle against his own son. But

now the Venetians and the pope tried to set up an alliance with Uzun Hassan, the Muslim warrior hostile to the Ottomans. Hassan attacked the outskirts of the Ottoman kingdom, and was successful to a degree. In 1472, Mehmet retaliated. Uzzum Hassan was defeated after an eight-hour pitched battle and thousands were killed. The Venetians and the pope urged Hassan to fresh battles against the Ottomans. But Hassan refused. He died in obscurity in 1478.

### (3)

Inside the vast Ottoman empire, the rule was "a military theocracy, as that of Byzantium had been" says Kinross. It is important to note that while the Ottomans now claimed to have a Muslim state, the laws of the empire and practices of the Sultans were their own. Bernard Lewis in *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* follows the standard Western line about how the Turks attempted to "impose" Islam on Europe, conveniently ignoring Murad's Byzantine leanings; he was greatly influenced by his step-mother, the "half-Serbian, half-Greek widow, the Lady Mara". What the Ottomans enforced was a combination of Islamic directives along with their own dogma with the blessings of Ulema selected by themselves. As we shall see, while the occasional sultan was religious, the rest only donned the garb of Islam when they wanted support from the masses; most sultans "married" European women, and lived a lifestyle entirely divorced from Islam. Even Bernard Lewis concedes that their Islam, (when it was practiced) was of a different hue from that practiced elsewhere. "The Islam of the Turkish frontiersmen was thus of a different temper from that of the heartlands of Islam...the free Turks were Islamized and educated in the borderlands...their teachers [preached] a very different faith from that of the theologians and the seminaries of the cities...*theirs was a militant faith...a religion of warriors, whose creed was a battle-cry, whose dogma was a call to arms...this was the faith...which the first Turks brought to Anatolia*"<sup>5</sup>.

In Europe, monarchs were already claiming Divine Rights, and clearly influenced by this, growing alliances with Europe's royalty, the Ottoman Sultans, now commenced to claim to be appointed by God. Therefore the sultan could demand total subservience from his subjects.

The civil government over which the Grand Vizier (essentially Prime Minister) presided consisted of four pillars, and "while it was set to be symbolic of religious (Islamic) concepts, the *Kanun nameh* reflected not Moslem but Turkish traditions" reports Kinross. Of the four pillars, one represented the Vizier, the second, the administration of justice, the third, fiscal and financial administration and the fourth, the *nisanjis*, the chancellors and secretaries of state. The rules and regulations under which these main four pillars were to function were called the *Kanun nameh*. But anything beyond the regulations was to be subject to the Qur'anic laws and to the Sharia (Islamic traditions), as interpreted by the fetva of the Grand Mufti, the chief religious authority, usually a docile subject of the Sultan. In this way, the Sultan hoped to keep the practicing Muslims happy and lay claim to having a Muslim State<sup>6</sup>.



The *Kanun Nameh* however went into great details on regulations, down to the type and color of shoes to be worn by different ranks and occupations. Colors and styles of dress for the various professions were codified. Mehmet II also now took a Byzantine practice, which earlier Sultans had not followed. He became more of a royal figure, aloof, disdaining the Muslim practice of mingling with the subjects. His household staff consisted primarily of Christian converts to Islam, says Kinross. There was also a Palace School for the imperial pages and future officials.<sup>7</sup>

Outside of this practices within the Court circles, the administration already set up in, many ways, highly progressive; European ambassadors (not as yet advanced, and constantly seeking, as always, to learn Middle Eastern innovations) were required by their governments, says Kinross, to report on such advanced practices, to learn from the system set up in Turkey, *including the school system*. The schools aimed to create quality public servants but following earlier Arab and Persian models, were also expanded to seek out special talents in any area, to provide training in the arts, crafts, to encourage the talented in the arts and crafts, from filigree and carpentry to embroidery and agriculture. Knowledge of Turkish, Arabic (grammar, mathematics), Persian (poetry and literature) was encouraged. The schools aimed "to create a type of loyal Ottoman public servant who was at once warrior, statesman, and loyal Moslem and who would be also, in the words of a later sixteenth century Italian writer "a man of letters and a gentleman of polished speech, profound courtesy and honest morals" writes Kinross. Teachers comprised not only the *Ulema* (Muslim theologians) but also scientists, scholars, writers including those who were specialists in Greek arts and thought. *Many learned Byzantine Greeks who had fled to Italy at the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople now returned and soon became teachers even at the Palace schools*, Kinross confirms this. Physical training was also an important part of the curriculum, including sports, which ranged from archery and swordsmanship to polo. These schools were to flourish for five centuries.

The empire was divided into provinces, which in turn were subdivided into districts, into fiefs. The peasantry paid taxes to the local military, but could cultivate their lands. The military elite at the top was the Janissaries, trained throughout their lives into an elite Ottoman force.<sup>8</sup> And now, taxes on foreign goods were increased, those on local productions were reduced, leading to a new, flourishing class of "Turkish Greek, Armenians and Jews who tended henceforth to replace the [foreign] Italian merchants." But this was to be reversed by Suleiman father and sons, leading to disaster for Turkey.

Mehmet II rather shrewdly sought to crush any attempted overthrow of the Ottoman rule by older Muslim regimes now within the Ottoman State, by "democratizing" the entire society. He eliminated the old ruling classes throughout the empire, creating instead a flexible society "in which a servant might surpass the master and the master his own superior...privilege of birth did not exist... theirs was a meritocracy in which privilege had to be earned" says Kinross.<sup>9</sup> The Sultan himself was of course above the principles of meritocracy. He was all-powerful.

Even his Janissaries were *above the law*, answerable only to the Sultan himself. In this environment, Mehmet II felt relatively safe from censor for his own hedonistic lifestyle. He was fluent in six languages, reportedly very fond of food and wine. He was also very fond of art. He invited famous painters and sculptors of the time to his palace, including the Venetian gentile Bellini. And he favored Persian literature and poetry, as well as Shi'ite Sufism, which was frowned upon by his orthodox Sunni theologians. "Kinross reports that the Venetians, continually bent on the assassination of Mehmet, made over a period of some twenty years no fewer than fourteen attempts to have Mehmet poisoned, through their agents." However Mehmet "The Conqueror" died of natural causes May 4, 1481.

The sixteenth century saw the Ottoman Empire at its zenith. But now there was rivalry between Mehmet's sons, Beyazid II and his younger brother Prince Jem. Beyazid was a quiet, scholarly mystic, peace-loving, not at all anxious to battle. Jem, on the other hand, twelve years younger, was outgoing, fun-loving, but intensely ambitious.

#### (4)

When Mehmet II died, his son Jem staked a claim to the throne. But the Janissaries (by now strict Muslims) preferred Beyazid as "more representative of the Gazi tradition" writes Kinross.<sup>10</sup> Jem's suggestion that they divide the Empire into two, Europe under Beyazid and Asia under himself, was rejected. In the battle that ensued, Beyazid's commander won. Jem was forced into exile, given protection by Kait Bey, the Mamluk Sultan of Egypt. He tried again to get the Ottoman throne but was defeated again. In victory, Beyazid offered a large settlement on his brother, to restore him to his old position as governor of Karamania. Jem refused, seeking instead the protection of the Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, the Knights Hospitallers. They were now in Rhodes where the grand master D'Aubusson received Jem with great joy. "Though Jem at first did not realize it, the concern of the knights for him was essentially political in motive. He was in fact a precious hostage in the hands of Christendom against Ottoman aggression."<sup>11</sup> Nor did he know that the Knights Hospitallers had demanded and received a ransom of 45,000 gold pieces, paid by his brother Beyazid II to the Knights of the Order. Jem's captors or "hosts, first in France, then at the Vatican in Rome, were really his jailers and would-be exploiters, awaiting a propitious moment to let loose this 'brother of the Turk' on their now formidable common enemy. He was made a pawn in the diplomatic intrigue of the contending Christian princes. Finally he died in Naples, perhaps poisoned, as was widely and with evidence believed, by the Borgia Pope" (ibid). Poisoning people was one of Pope Alexander VI's specialties.

"For all his peaceable inclinations, Bayazid, both before and after Jem's death, was inexorably involved in the maneuvers of European diplomacy... determined to put an end to all [European] crusading adventures, he [Bayazid] continued to build up the Ottoman fleet, as his father had initially done." And it came in very useful in a war that ensued after his war with Venice, "in which he defeated the Venetians,

and captured Lepanto, Modon, Coron, and Navarino in Greece... A peace treaty was signed in 1503 between the Sultan and the Venetians and its various allies which mainly confirmed the *status quo*.<sup>12</sup>

Bayezid was very tolerant of other faiths. Jews in large number came, especially from Spain. And, being the philosopher he was, he did not share the hatred, which other Ottoman Sultans had expressed against the Shias. Ismail, the new Shah of Persia, who took power in 1502, was determined not to let the Ottomans make any more inroads into Persian territories. And he made Shi'ite Islam, which most of his subjects followed, the State religion. "Ismail became known as the Great Sufi, while his heterodox beliefs won wide support throughout eastern and southern Anatolia. Bayezid himself, with his mystical inclinations, had shown some sympathy with the philosophical doctrines of Sufism."<sup>13</sup> So he was very reluctant to go to battle against Persia, as the powerful Orthodox elements in his kingdom as well as his Janissaries now demanded. Of his three sons, Selim was clearly the most ambitious, "most vigorous and warlike." Noting his father's unpopularity among the majority Orthodox Muslims, Selim now fled to Crimea, mobilized an army and invaded his father's lands. Selim with his army and the support of the Janissaries, arrived in Istanbul and forced his father to abdicate. Bayezid, more than ever "a peace-loving, contemplative scholar", says Kinross, was very willing and asked merely to be allowed to retire to Demotika. *He was allowed to go, but was poisoned on the way at the orders of Selim, now the Sultan.*

### (5)

The blood of the Ottoman sultans was already more European than Asian, from offspring of their many European mistresses and occasional European marriages. But while many European rulers found ways to kill their rivals, the barbaric Selim, who had put his own father to death, went further: "For the welfare of the state, the one of my sons to whom God grants the Sultanate may lawfully put his brothers to death," he announced. It was the kind of gruesome practice nomadic warring tribes had used to maintain order and, some European rulers resorted to as well.

Among his first acts was to have his two brothers and five little nephews killed. Then he decided Christian Europe was not his main enemy, *Shia Muslims were*. "The new Sultan was dedicated above all to the extermination from his empire of the heresy of Shi'ism ...Before embarking on a holy war against him [Shah Ismail of Persia], Selim saw to the elimination of some forty thousand of Ismail's religious followers [i.e., Shiites] in Anatolia, an action comparable in Islamic terms to the contemporary Massacre of St. Bartholomew in Christian Europe."<sup>14</sup>

Selim sent threats to Ismail, but "Osmol [Ismail] refused to be provoked by him, proposing peaceful relations," reports Kinross. But he was forced into battle when Selim advanced to Chaldaran. Selim "captured Tabriz, massacring his prisoners but dispatching to Istanbul some thousand of those craftsmen for whom the city was famous, there to ply their trade and enrich Ottoman architecture" (ibid) He eventually annexed the entire plateau of Anatolia, and among the

punishments he inflicted upon the Persians was a ban on their silk trade with Europe, one of their most profitable trades. He then exiled the Persian silk merchants to his Balkan territories.

Next, in 1516, Selim turned upon the Mamluks, the Muslim rulers of Egypt and Aleppo, who were already threatened by Portugal's adventures. The Mamluks needed arms if the Portuguese attacked. But instead of providing this, Selim himself marched into battle *against* the Mamluks, killing the Mamluk Sultan at Aleppo. Selim captured Damascus, Beirut and Palestine's Gaza. *Then he announced that he would go on a pilgrimage to the tombs of the prophets and to Jerusalem.*

In victory, Selim was again brutal towards the conquered Muslims, "for Selim was more indulgent to Christians than to Moslem heretics [Shias]" says Kinross<sup>15</sup>. Even before proceeding on what he called a "holy war" against Persia, "Selim saw to the elimination of some forty thousand of [Persian shah] Ismail's religious followers [sic] in Anatolia...for vindication of orthodoxy, this won him the title of 'the Just'" says Kinross. Christians were allowed what came to be known as Capitulation, whereby they were not subject even to Turkish laws, *even when they committed crimes*. It was the beginning of Europe's colonial grasp upon the Muslim world. The generous treatment meted out to Christians by Ottoman sultans like Selim and others who followed, won praise from the West. *And yet it is the bloodthirsty tactics of sultans like Selim, called "The Just" by Western historians, to which Western historians often point as indicative of Muslim barbarism when in fact their barbarism was directed primarily at Muslims, usually Shias, and they often favored Christians.*

Sultan Selim now made Abbasid Caliph Al-Mutawakkil, his prisoner and declared himself the rightful Sultan of the entire Mamluk domain, with the Mamluk princes his vassals, and later announced he was Caliph and the custodian of Mecca and Medina. He killed, on whim, his governors, even seven of his Grand Vazirs "The phrase 'mayest thou be Selim's Vezir' came to be used in Turkish parlance as implying the curse 'Strike you dead'" says Kinross<sup>16</sup>. Selim himself died rather painfully of cancer in 1519. He had doubled in less than a decade the size of the Ottoman Empire, *much of it from other Muslim states.*

Selim's sheer brutality caused many of religious Muslims in his domain to wonder if God would punish them all for his sins. When he died, Turkey extended from the banks of the Danube to those of the Nile, from the coasts of the Adriatic to those of the Indian Ocean. This was to be the "imperial inheritance" of his son Suleiman, a different man, a better ruler in many ways, and the Ottoman state flourished under him. It is however seldom recognized that it was not his father Selim's sins but Suleiman's own personal vulnerability to the charms of one of his concubine that led the Ottoman state on a steady, destructive course from which it was never to recover. Suleiman's favorite concubine, Roxylana (Las Rossa), daughter of a Russian/Ukrainian Christian priest, was to prevail upon him to murder his favorite, upstanding son Mustafa, and make Roxylana's degenerate son also called Selim his successor, setting up the Ottoman sultan's practice of letting favorite concubines, almost always Europeans, select their own sons as sultan,



and then the viziers or Ministers, to favor their country of birth. Suleiman achieved a lot for Turkey, he fought against Crusaders when they crusaded, but like his father Selim, he reserved his bitter hatred for the Muslim minorities, especially the Shias of Persia. The Shias were not at all without their own brand of hate for the Sunnis, of course. Europe was naturally pleased at this internal strife within the Muslim world and sought to encourage it whenever possible. Later the Pope even offered the Shah of Persia a treaty against Turkey. But the Shah declined.

Some Europeans were genuine friends, then and later, to Muslims. But praise lavished in the West upon Muslim leaders, from Saladin, Al Kamil and Suleiman onwards all the way down to Anwar Sadat in our times, did encourage them to be even more "generous". It caused the Muslim world irreparable damage. In the long run, it did not benefit Christendom either, as it created bitter hate among Muslim extremists towards what they saw as the exploitation by Christians.

## Chapter 14

# Suleiman "The Magnificent"

(1)

Suleiman succeeded his brutal father in 1520 AD. It was the age of the Habsburg Emperor Charles V, Francis I of the House of Valois in France, and Henry VIII in England. Suleiman was the tenth Ottoman Emperor, reigning in the tenth century of the Hegira, considered highly significant among some numerologists of the time. It was an era of dawning Renaissance but also growing superstition in Europe, one of which was a legend that the Turks were a punishment of the sins of Christendom; "Turk-bells" were rung at churches to invite believers to prayer. Old superstition resurfaced. It was said that the Turks would conquer Europe all the way to the "holy city" of Cologne, where a "Christian emperor" would drive them back beyond Jerusalem. Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, was now that champion of Christendom. His empire extended from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, from the Netherlands through Germany and Austria to Spain. It included the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily and a foothold in Mexico and Peru.

Charles V proclaimed a crusade against the Turks. But first he wished to deal with the threat of Francis I of France, whose lands were an irritating division of Charles' vast kingdom. Francis for his part announced a Crusade against the Turks. But knowing of Charles' designs on his own kingdom, Francis I now sought a secret alliance with the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman.<sup>1</sup> Suleiman was willing not only to embrace the alliance but also provide generous monetary grants to Francis. According to Kinross, in 1533 alone, Suleiman gave 100,000 gold pieces which Francis pleaded was essential to pay England and German princes for their support of France against the might of Charles V and his designs. Two years later he begged for another one million ducats. This "sacrilegious union of the Lily and the Crescent" (as the Christian and Muslim world were called) was vehemently denied by Francis. He claimed that he was ever ready for a crusade against the infidel Muslims. Fearful of offending Suleiman by these pronouncements, he provided proper excuses for such comments "through his envoy in Istanbul" to the Ottoman sultan. Venice also managed to play

both sides, providing the Ottoman sultan with "intelligence" about European intrigues, while providing the rest of Europe with similar tidbits about Suleiman. One such "secret agent" Bartholomew Contrini, describing the new Sultan to European princes, said he was a "wise Lord, fond of study...It became Suleiman's ambition to unite, as Iskander [Alexander the Great] had sought to do, the lands and peoples of East and West" says Kinross. Apparently it never occurred to Suleiman (as it had not to his ancestor Mehmet II) that Alexander had sought this East-West unity *before* the advent of Christianity and Islam, and that such goals in the heavily fanatical atmosphere of the sixteenth century could never be acceptable in Europe, which hated Islam more than ever. At this point, the Spanish Inquisition was in full swing, offering those millions of Muslims in Spain the alternative of conversion, death, or banishment. Reports of the holocaust in Spain were spreading everywhere through the survivors who escaped it. *There is no evidence that Suleiman did anything meaningful to stop the genocide of Muslims in Spain.*

When Suleiman and Charles V clashed for the first time in battle, Belgrade fell to the Ottomans. Leaving his Janissaries in charge at Belgrade, Suleiman proceeded to deal with another continuing source of grave problems for his empire; this one from the Island of Rhodes, 'Knights Hospitallers of the Order of St. John' (as Christendom called them) and "professional cutthroats and pirates" (as the Turks called them) "continually threatened Ottoman trade with Alexandria; [they] intercepted Turkish supply ships carrying timber and other such goods to Egypt and pilgrims en route to Mecca via Suez; [they] interfered with the operations of the Sultan's own corsairs; and had supported a rebellion against the Ottoman authorities in Syria. Thus Suleiman resolved on the capture of Rhodes...To an ultimatum from the Sultan embodying the customary peace offer prescribed by Chorionic [Quranic] tradition to precede an attack, the [Knights] grand master replied only by accelerating his plans." The Knights' garrison had been reinforced with forces from all over Europe, and "despite Venetian neutrality, to procure five hundred archers from Crete, who embarked in the guise of porters and deckhands" says Kinross<sup>3</sup>.

The siege, which began in 1522, led to heavy casualties, and in December Suleiman declared a three-day truce during which he offered "the knights, and those among the inhabitants [of Rhodes] who chose, to depart unmolested with their portable possessions. Those who preferred to remain were granted undisturbed retention of their houses and property, complete religious liberty, and five years exemption from tribute"<sup>4</sup>. The Knights left January 1, 1523, says Kinross, searched aimlessly for a home in Sicily and Rome for five years after they were shipwrecked in a hurricane off Crete, found asylum in Malta; from there five years later, they elected to attack the Turks again (ibid).

## ( 2 )

For three years thereafter, Suleiman looked inward, reorganizing and quelling rebellions, such as that of Ahmet Pasha of Egypt, and the mutiny of the Janissaries. There were rival claimants to the throne of Hungary; one being Archduke Ferdinand,

brother of Charles V and the other Zapolya, Prince of Transylvania. The Diet elected Zapolya, a choice with which Suleiman concurred as Zapolya was an ally of Francis I. But Ferdinand already had the support of pro-German factions in his bid for the throne of Bohemia. A civil war ensued, Zapolya was defeated and Ferdinand was crowned king of Hungary with visions of combining the thrones of Austria, Bohemia and Hungary. The defeated Zapolya sought Suleiman's aid for his remaining domain. Somewhat reluctantly, Suleiman's Vezir (Ibrahim Pasha, a Christian convert) agreed to defend Zapolya's rights as King, and granted other favors, in return for which Zapolya became a vassal of the Sultan.

On May 10, 1529, the Ottoman Sultan and his forces left Istanbul under the care of Ibrahim Pasha to keep their promise to Zapolya. Ferdinand had sought the help of his brother Charles V, and that of various other German princes to create a vast army himself ("In Austria, every tenth man was conscripted" says Kinross). At the last moment, rather cleverly, he also sought Martin Luther's aid. The religious fervor that Luther's appeal provided created the fire of a Crusade against the infidel Turks. In preparing for battle, the Christian forces now decided that the "defenses of Vienna" were best served by destroying much of the city itself. "*This involved the burning of all the suburbs, eight hundred buildings in all, which included the city hospital, several churches and convents, and a castle on a hilltop which might have served the Turks as a stronghold.*" reports Kinross<sup>5</sup>.

Suleiman had bad weather and overconfidence. They combined to cause him to leave behind heavy artillery and after fierce battles, the Turks, exhausted, finally withdrew. The Christian world was jubilant. Suleiman the Magnificent had suffered his first defeat. In reality, however, the Christian forces recognized that another, better-planned and executed assault by the Turks would spell disaster for Hungary and much of Eastern Europe. Ferdinand therefore sent an envoy to the Sultan, "requesting a truce and offering to pay an annual 'pension' to the Sultan - with another to the Grand Vezir - if they would recognize him as king of Hungary and abandon Zapolya."<sup>7</sup> Suleiman refused.

From the perspective of the late twentieth century, it may be hard to realize that European princes were still servile to the Ottomans. For instance, even the Grand Vezir, in his communications, had contemptuously called him "Ferdinand," with no title; and Suleiman addressed Charles, the Holy Roman Emperor contemptuously as "the king of Spain." So now Suleiman refused to abandon Zapolya, and on April 26, 1532, set forth for the Danube once again. A frightened Ferdinand sent more envoys with more concessions, more 'pensions' and even "certain conditions to recognize the claims of Zapolya" Suleiman, however, "receiving his envoys...in an audience... made it clear to them that his enemy was not Ferdinand but Charles: 'The King of Spain' he challenged 'has for a long time declared his wish to go against the Turks; but I, by the grace of God, am proceeding with my army against him. If he is great in heart, let him await me in the field, and then, whatever God wills shall be. If, however, he does not wish to wait for me, let him send tribute to my Imperial Majesty.'"<sup>8</sup>



Charles was certainly not willing to meet Suleiman's challenge of a personal duel. As the anointed Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, he asked Christian princes to recognize the threat of the Muslim invaders and called on them to battle in a Crusade against Suleiman. In panic Charles was now even willing to come to terms with the Lutherans, and other Protestants. Ironically, the Turks themselves were respectful of the Protestants' faith "not merely in political but in religious terms, taking account of its prohibition, common to Islam, of the worship of images."<sup>9</sup> They could not understand why the Protestants joined the "King of Spain" in the new crusade against Turkey!

Suleiman marched to Vienna, and repeated his challenge to Charles to come out of hiding for a man-to-man duel. This was a marvelous idea and could well have led to a tradition of such civilized combats between leaders, rather than the death and destruction of entire forces and countries at the orders of a "leader". But Charles was not man enough to accept the challenge. Then Suleiman ordered a withdrawal to Istanbul, after winning a battle against a small Croatian fortress.

In Hungary, Ferdinand once again sought a settlement, this time "addressed himself in the style of a son to a father" (i.e. to Suleiman)<sup>10</sup>. Suleiman in turn agreed to treat Ferdinand as a son "not for seven years, for twenty-five years, for a hundred years, but for two centuries, three centuries indeed for ever, if Ferdinand [i.e., Hungary] does not break it [the bond]" reports Kinross<sup>11</sup>. So now it was agreed that Hungary was to be partitioned between two sovereigns, Ferdinand and Zapolya. Later, Suleiman was to find that such "father-son" relationships with European princes were disastrous. When it suited them, both Ferdinand and Zapolya were to secretly intrigue against Suleiman.

No similar peace treaty, even a temporary one, was available with Charles V, Emperor of Holy Roman Empire. However Suleiman had by now trained an Ottoman force to be respected: "Here were no barbaric hordes from the steppes of Asia, but a highly organized modern army, such as the West, in this age, had not before encountered." Kinross.<sup>12</sup> So Christendom officially declared that it recognized the Ottoman Empire, the "New Byzantium" as a lasting political factor in what was to be the Concert of Europe. Behind the scenes, however, powerful Christian clergy had convinced the court of Henry VIII and of Charles V that this non-Christian Emperor must be kept as a permanent enemy of Christendom.

In the meanwhile, Venice, as Kinross puts it "learned to kiss the hand [Suleiman's] that she could not cut off." The Venetian Doge, along with other Christian princes of Europe, who had either sworn fealty to Istanbul or had gained great benefits personally from treaties and support of the Sultan, also kept secret liaison with spies in Suleiman's court, waiting for opportunities to strike. There was an image problem with this spying in that with these factual reports from the Sultan courts, some of the myths and propaganda of the past could no longer be maintained. "The image of Suleiman now increasingly presented to the West was, by comparison with those of his Ottoman forebears, that of a civilized monarch... Suleiman's daily life in the palace [as revealed by the spies] ... followed a ritual comparable ... to the French kings at Versailles."<sup>13</sup> There was however one major

difference, which the spies, for obvious reasons, usually skipped over quickly: *The Ottoman Sultan bathed daily and washed frequently during the day. At Versailles, as in other European courts, washing was fiercely avoided by men and women, from laziness and superstitious fears; perfumes, powder, wigs provided cover for the layers of bodily dirt and smells.*

## (3)

As the pre-eminent world power, the Ottoman court had ambassadors from all major European and Asian states. The Ottomans, on the other hand, saw themselves as far too superior and *had no representations in foreign countries* — a fact that would prove disastrous later as Europe's galloping progress would catch the Ottomans completely by surprise. Despite the hostility between Charles V and Suleiman, the former had an envoy, Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, a Flemish nobleman at Suleiman's court. In several letters of praise of Suleiman's personal qualities, his people and his administration, Busbecq "proved quick to appreciate more civilized aspects of this unfamiliar world of the East" (Kinross).<sup>14</sup> Busbecq praised, among other things, the civilized behavior of crowds, apparently different from what he was accustomed to seeing in Europe; the democratic equality of appointments, based solely upon merit, not rank and birth shocked him: "Thus each man is rewarded according to his deserts, and offices are filled by men capable of performing them." (ibid)

But then there was Grand Vizier Ibrahim, of Greek Christian origin. While many converts to Islam then and later were to become loyal, even staunch Muslims, some were at best "enigmatic." Ibrahim (Abraham), a favorite of Suleiman's mistress, became very close to Suleiman, told European ambassadors like de Busbecq "It is I who govern"<sup>15</sup> Apparently, Suleiman did not "object to the arrogant pretensions of his vizier" and "Ibrahim contributed in a major sense to the initiation to... a new European relationship for the Ottoman Empire." The landmark 1535 treaty with France, not only "granted complete religious liberty to the French ... [but] it was momentous in that it marked the start of a system of privileges to foreign powers known as the Capitulations." (ibid) Other Christian powers asked for and got "Capitulations" so their citizens in Turkey were allowed not only to trade but be exempt from local taxes and immune from Turkish laws generally.

Under Suleiman, France was "granted complete religious liberty to the French in the Ottoman Empire, with a right to keep guard over the Christian holy places, and amounted, in effect, to a French protectorate over all Catholics in the Levant. ... [This] put an end to the commercial predominance of Venice in the Mediterranean." (Kinross). As we shall see, France and others later were permitted to levy and receive religious donations at all these Christian religious sites in Turkey. In a letter, another envoy (Bailo Barbaro) said "It is a fact worthy of much consideration that the riches, the forces, the government, and in short the whole state of the Ottoman Empire is founded upon and placed in the hands of persons all born in the faith of Christ." Judges and jurists, professors, and theologians (*ulema*)

were naturally Muslims as "four-fifths of its population — which at the end of his [Suleiman's] reign was estimated at fifteen million, from twenty different races under twenty-one different governments — were now inhabitants of Asia."<sup>16</sup> They resented the foreign imposition.

Recognizing public unhappiness with the many non-Islamic law codes set up, Suleiman now set about conducting a balancing act. He appointed one Mullah Ibrahim of Aleppo to evolve what came to be called *Multeka-ul-uhur*, and others in Egypt to work on a constitution. Overall, he worked with "jurists and theologians of the *ulema*" (his appointed religious leaders) who advised him how far he could go without actually contravening "Sacred Law" On canonical legislation, Suleiman himself "worked for the special benefit of his Christian subjects" writes Kinross.<sup>17</sup>

Even Christian peasant communities (*rayas*) received special treatment from Suleiman. "The lot of the *rayas* indeed, under the maligned 'Turkish yoke' proved so superior to that of the serfs of Christendom under certain Christian masters that the inhabitants of neighboring countries might often prefer, as described by a contemporary writer, to escape across the frontier: 'I have seen multitudes of Hungarian rustics set fire to their cottages and fly, with their wives and children, their cattle and instruments of labour, to the Turkish territories, where they knew that, beside the payment of the tenths, they would be subject to no imposts or vexations'. The same tendency was to prevail among the inhabitants of the Morea, who preferred Ottoman to Venetian rule".<sup>18</sup>

Suleiman made lavish investments in architecture, attempting to combine all he saw best in Western and Eastern qualities that could be used without contravening the laws of Islam. He used Miran Sinan, of Anatolia, now recognized, says Kinross, as "one of history's great architects", but he was particularly impressed with Persian crafts and culture; he brought craftsmen from Tabriz in Persia. Classical Persian poetry was among his favorites. Suleiman created the position of Poet Laureate, whose duties included recording of current historical events in the manner of the Persian poet Firdausi. And yet, Suleiman hated Persians as they were predominantly Shi'ite.

The Janissaries, the elite of the military, mostly militant in Europe, were still exclusively Christian-born, but trained from an early age as Muslims. But by now Muslim parents, noting the high position the Janissaries held, tried hard to get their boys admitted to the Janissaries. Alan Palmer, reports (in *The Decline and Fall of the Ottoman Empire*) that there were instances of Muslim fathers lending sons to Christian families so that they could be selected for the Janissaries.

Bosnia, led by its aristocracy, was slowly converting to Islam. At the same time there was a growing movement by these Bosnian Muslims for autonomy from the Turks. There was also considerable talent there, which the Ottomans sought to use for their Empire. Several Bosnians and Albanians were to be recruited for the highest offices in the Ottoman Empire. At this stage, as in the past regimes, Suleiman chose, however, to have around him in his court and at the Sublime Porte (the Government House) mainly Christians and Christian converts in positions of importance. The Grand Vizier, Ibrahim Pasha, was, as we have seen, Christian-

born; he could well have become a sincere Muslim after conversion. In any case, most of the administration was, as Kinross puts it, in the hand of those "born in the faith of Christ."

Suleiman did not neglect the majority Muslim population and their well-being. With the help of the *ulema*, he improved on the school system, which became outstanding for his times anywhere in the world. "They provided Moslem boys with an education which was largely free and moreover far in advance of any available at this time in Christian countries... If they [the students] chose and had the capacity, they could proceed to one of eight colleges (*medresses*) built in the precincts of the eight principle mosques and known as the 'eight paradises of knowledge'... There were also higher *medresses*, law schools of university status, most of whose graduates became imams (prayer leaders) or teachers... the cultural influence of Persia still predominated in the literary field [outside of Persia's Shi'ite Islam, of course]... Ottoman poetry reached in the Persian tradition reached a standard higher than ever before. He [Suleiman] instituted the high official post of Imperial Rhyming Chronicler, a kind of Ottoman poet laureate... after the manner of Firdausi and other such Persian chroniclers of historic occasions" reports Kinross.<sup>19</sup>

#### (4)

In Spain the massacre and expulsion of those Muslims who did not fully convert to Christianity continued with even greater vehemence. Emperor Charles and the Church knew that the fury this must arouse in the Muslims world, especially on the North African coast, could cause trouble for Spain. And the Muslims did retaliate along the Spanish coast with raids along with Jews who also had suffered the same fate as the Muslims in Spain. Future pop historians in the West, ignoring the root cause of this anger i.e. the brutal Spanish inquisition, would instantly label it "piracy." Spain's new Christian rulers decided that the best form of defense is attack, so Spain made violent attacks on North Africa, succeeded in overthrowing the Fatimid caliphate there, installing local chieftains along the Barbary Coast, some of whom were pirates and others willing to be the vassals of Emperor Charles.

Many "Moors" of North Africa had been killed in these Spanish attacks but the rest had now found effective leaders in two seafaring Barbarossa brothers. They were sons of a Christian potter and the widow of a Greek priest, from Lesbos, "a notorious center of Christian piracy"<sup>20</sup>. But the Barbarossa brother greatly sympathized with the Muslim Moors for the ongoing massacres of Muslims in Spain. They led the fight against the Spanish Christian invaders. After successfully liberating Algiers from the Spanish invaders and their local chieftains, one brother Aruj lost his life in a battle at Tlemcen, fighting it is said "to the very last breath, like a lion" (ibid). The Turks had heard about these remarkable brothers; in 1518 Khairuddin Barbarossa had already converted to Islam, was made naval commander in the service of the Turks, to all intents a Janissary. And he was in that position when, in 1533 Christian naval forces under Genoese Admiral Andrea Doria were



on their way from Western to the Eastern Mediterranean to attack the Turks. Doria had been in the employ of Francis I of France, an ally of Suleiman, but he had now apparently switched sides to the Hapsburg emperor. The Turkish military and naval forces managed to thwart Doria at Coron, but Suleiman realized that while his forces on land could defend and attack, his naval force needed to be strengthened. He employed Barbarossa to supervise the construction of new vessels, and concurrently signed a Turco-French treaty with King Francis of France, affirming their mutual defense commitment against all invasions, especially the militant Spanish. With a more powerful newly renovated fleet, Barbarossa then sailed out into the Mediterranean, quickly annexed Tunis for the Ottomans. Emperor Charles (ruler of Spain and the Holy Roman Emperor) sent secret agents to try first to ignite a revolution in Tunis, then to bribe Barbarossa to join him. Both attempted failed. So the Pope announced a Crusade. The forces placed under the command of Admiral Andrea Doria, included Charles' imperial forces and those of Spain, Germany and Italy, reports Kinross.

## (5)

The Christian forces launched a Crusade by landing at the ruins of Carthage, and sacked Tunis for twenty-four days. Tunis was defended by a Jewish commander for the Ottomans, and he now fell fighting. The Crusaders, led by Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, entered Tunis, and "after three days of massacre, plunder and rape by his Christian soldiery reinstated Muley Hassan (removed for corruption) to the throne as his [Emperor Charles'] vassal... Charles was acclaimed as a conqueror throughout Christendom, and created a new order of crusading chivalry, the Cross of Tunis, with the motto 'Barbaria'".

Barbarossa in the meanwhile had managed to escape the massacre and retaliated by attacking the Emperor Charles' own Balearic Islands. Then Barbarossa's forces sacked Minorca, carrying off much of the Spain's treasures (brought from the New World and stored there) to Algiers. Now Andrea Doria raided Turkish sea-lanes, captured ten Turkish merchant ships and all their valuable cargo. Recognizing the dangers, Suleiman ordered a new fleet of two hundred vessels to be built in 1536. The following year, King Francis of France evolved a battle strategy with Suleiman. Turkish naval force would attack the Italian coast, while the Sultan's forces would march across Albania to Italy, and France with Turco-French forces would join them from Marseilles. Barbarossa sailed out of the Golden Horn, struck with such fury that Andrea Doria was paralyzed from fear. But once again, the King of France "with his habitual duplicity" (as Kinross puts it) double-crossed Suleiman; instead of attacking as planned, he made a secret truce with Emperor Charles. Now Suleiman attacked "the Venetians who had committed acts of overt hostility against Turkish shipping" during which the Venetians killed all the Turkish sailors of ships they captured. Barbarossa in turn, attacked the Venetian Islands and sacked them.

## (6)

Christendom announced yet another Crusade, this time including not only Emperor Charles' own Spanish forces and those from his other European territories, and those of a somewhat reluctant Venice, but also the Pope's own naval forces. They totaled two hundred vessels, and sixty thousand men, far outnumbering the strength of Barbarossa. But it was Barbarossa who won by superior tactics, forcing Andrea Doria's Armada to beat "a full retreat to Corfu, whence it was soon to disperse to its various home ports".<sup>21</sup>

Venice now pleaded with Francis I of France to arrange for a treaty with Suleiman. But Emperor Charles convinced Francis that this new Crusade would provide victory. In 1541, while Barbarossa and other naval commanders were called to Istanbul, Charles led the new Crusade with "a large armada and army, to capture Algiers. Thanks to a hurricane this ended in total disaster."<sup>22</sup> In response, two years later, Suleiman sent Barbarossa and a French commander to western Mediterranean, where they ravaged the coasts of Naples and Sicily. "Landing at Marseilles, Barbarossa was received by the young Bourbon Duke of Angoulême... granted as his naval headquarters the port of Toulon." There were atrocities "for which the French blamed the Turks and the Turks blamed the French"<sup>23</sup>. In 1554, Barbarossa sailed back to Istanbul; two years later he died there, a hero.

## (7)

The Ottomans had prevailed in these recent Crusades. But now the suicidal hostilities between Muslim schools of thought proved the undoing of the Ottomans. It was obvious that having already launched a series of Crusades that Christians had lost, Emperor Charles and the Pope would launch another invasion. Suleiman had already recognized the need to improve the quality and the strength of his fleet and should have been working feverishly towards strengthening his forces, awaiting the anticipated Crusading onslaught.

Instead, Suleiman decided that *waging a war against the Persians was more important*. He launched three campaigns against Persia in 1533-34. As Europe seemed ready to strike against the Turks, Suleiman decided had to arouse public support for his Persian adventure. That appeal, often even more effective than Christian versus Muslim, was Sunni versus Shia. Suleiman and his entourage were orthodox Sunni, and the Persians "heterodox Shi'ites." So Suleiman sent his Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha ahead of him to start the war against Persia and followed shortly thereafter. Ibrahim had already reached Tabriz when Suleiman captured Baghdad from the Persians. He sacked Tabriz next. He planned to conquer all of Persia, but word reached him of an impending new European crisis. Reluctantly, he returned to Istanbul.

## (8)

John Zapolya, who ruled Hungary jointly with Ferdinand (as approved by Suleiman) suddenly died. He had married Isabella, daughter of the King of Poland, and on his deathbed he received word that she had borne him a child. John Zapolya's deathbed wish was that Sultan Suleiman should be informed, and that his son, the infant Stephen, should succeed him as King. Ferdinand, wishing to take over the entire country, quickly launched an invasion of Buda, to proclaim himself king of all Hungary. In the meanwhile, the monk (Martinuzzi) who had married Zapolya and Isabella, also appealed to Suleiman to help establish the rights of Zapolya's infant child. Suleiman, while irritated by the duplicity and past devious behavior of both Zapolya and Ferdinand (just as King Francis of France irritated him with unreliability as an ally) agreed that the child's claim was valid, provided he was indeed Zapolya's child. Having convinced himself of this, Suleiman marched in 1541 to Buda, which Ferdinand's troops were attacking, and routed them. He crossed the Danube, destroyed the enemy again at Pesth. He ordered Isabella to retire for safety to Transylvania with the infant Stephen, until the child had reached an appropriate age when Suleiman ordered that the child was to rule under the title of King John Sigismund, the name of his forebears.

Ferdinand now tried to appease Suleiman, sent envoys with gifts. But Suleiman insisted that the rights of Zapolya's child must prevail. So Ferdinand decided once again to battle, invaded Pesth, was defeated. Convinced that he could no longer trust Ferdinand, Suleiman marched into Hungary in 1543, and in effect took over the bulk of it into the Ottoman Empire on behalf of the infant King John Sigismund.

## (9)

Now there was an extraordinary offer of peace from the heads of Christendom to the Ottoman Sultan. The offer came from the Pope and the Emperor Charles of the Holy Roman Empire. They sent joint ambassadors to Istanbul. Suleiman joyfully accepted this offer, as this would allow him to proceed again with his invasion of Persia. Terms of agreement however took a while, and in 1547, an agreement was signed, whereby the Christian leaders recognized that Suleiman's control of Hungary was legitimate (other than the small part over which Ferdinand still ruled). A five-year truce was signed by *Pope Paul III himself, Emperor Charles V on behalf of Spain and the Holy Roman Empire, the King of France, the Republic of Venice, and Sultan Suleiman*. Hungary was to remain divided as Suleiman had ordered, between Ferdinand and Zapolya's child Stephen (now King John Sigismund).

Having won peace with his European adversaries, Suleiman decided to invade Persia again. In 1548, he marched into Persia, but this time he was able to capture just the city of Van, after which he had to hastily withdraw. *What is amazing is that through all this, Suleiman seems to have had very little concern about the brutal holocaust being waged in Spain against the Muslims masses.* Why did not Suleiman

make this a major issue with Europe, part of his "truce" with the Pope and Charles V, demand that brutalities be stopped. After all, Christians were now getting more and more special privileges in the Ottoman Empire. It is conceivable that the Spanish brutalities might never have turned into a holocaust they soon did, *if the Turks had been more demanding of Europe that the atrocities upon the Muslims and Jews by Spain should stop, or else...*

Noting that Suleiman was busy using his military force in his war against Persia, Ferdinand of Hungary decided the time was ripe to renege on the peace treaty. As we have noted (a fact which presumably Suleiman had not) the Christian Church had always ruled that Christians were *not* obligated to honor any treaties signed with Muslim infidels. Ferdinand of Hungary now announced that he could ignore the agreement and capture the portion of Hungary held by Suleiman on behalf of Zapolya's child. Kinross reports that Ferdinand bribed the monk Martinuzzi. Now Martinuzzi was willing to switch sides and aid Ferdinand in return for being made Cardinal. Martinuzzi either persuaded or bribed Isabella, the child's mother, to also become party to a double-cross of her own child's rights. When Suleiman heard of this treachery, he is reported to have flung the Austrian envoy into the Black Tower in Istanbul. And he dispatched Mehmed Sokollu, (a Bosnian convert), and future Grand Vizier, to Lipa in Transylvania, (where the child was to be inaugurated) to capture the city. In panic "Cardinal" Martinuzzi, tried to switch sides again to the Turks, which angered Ferdinand. After recapturing Lipa in 1551, Ferdinand ordered the death of Martinuzzi by Spanish and Italian lieutenants, who killed him, leaving "sixty-three wounds in his body."<sup>26</sup>

Suleiman reacted to the recapture by Ferdinand of Lipa by sending troops in 1552 and increasing the area of Hungary under Turkish control; they captured half of Ferdinand's army and shipped them out to Buda to be sold as slaves, says Kinross.

Now convinced that he had his Hungarian problems resolved, Suleiman marched once again against the Shi'ites of Persia in 1553. The Persian Shah had advanced to retake some of the territories he had lost to the Turks before. When Suleiman marched against Persia, and in his initial successes, *Kinross says he used brutal methods he did not use against the Europeans, e.g., he laid "waste Persian territory by incendiary methods more savage than anything attempted in previous campaigns"* (ibid). After fierce battles, in which victories went to one side and then the other, a truce was signed between Turkey and Persia in 1554. The Ottoman-Persian wars of course pleased Christendom greatly. There were even reports that the Pope secretly attempted to get the Persian Shah to become *Christendom's* ally. But the Shah refused, says Kinross. Later, (in 1599) England also tried "—*unsuccessfully*—to persuade the Persians to ally themselves with the Christian powers against Turkey."<sup>27</sup> Suleiman's three invasions of Persia had extended Turkish control to include Baghdad, lower Mesopotamia, also a foothold around the waters of the Persian Gulf, the Euphrates and Tigris. Suleiman's empire now extended from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic.



## (10)

There were major problems in protecting the boundaries and the economy of the huge empire. There were problems from Europeans princes terminating treaties, switching sides, electing to go on the warpath in a Crusade. The Persians in the East were now of course very angry; there had been public demonstrations against Suleiman's attacks, led by the Shi'ite *ulema*, who also condemned the Sultan's and their own Shah's lifestyle and general moral turpitude. The gulf between the majority Sunnis and the Shias worsened.

While Suleiman concentrated on the conquer of Persia, there was a serious threat to the Ottomans as a result of the new sea route the Portuguese had developed in 1498 to gain access to the riches of India. From the time Vasco de Gama reached India, he had demanded that India open itself to Portuguese commercial interests (in much the same way that Americans were to demand it of Japan in 1853/4). In 1502 the Portuguese bombarded the coast of Calicut to obtain obedience to his order and got it. By 1538, the Portuguese became a major threat to the established Ottoman trade with India and the Far East. Already they had captured the island of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf and were battling to capture Aden, on the mouth of the Red Sea. Their objective was to gain control over traffic in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf so that Portugal's own new route via the Cape of Good Hope would monopolize trade with India and the Far East. Now, even as he set up, with the Egyptian pasha, a second naval front to withstand the threat posed by Portuguese naval presence, Suleiman received an appeal for help from Bahadur Shah of Gujarat in eastern India. This local princeling had allowed the Portuguese "People of the Book" to build a fortress on Diu island, and was now under threat as a result of his folly.

Suleiman had sent Suleiman Pasha of Egypt with a large land and sea force to confront the Portuguese at Aden. Suleiman Pasha retook Aden, thus freeing the Red Sea. Then he proceeded to Diu on the Indian coast to help Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. The Portuguese forces there fought back ably, but what devastated the Ottoman forces was the fact that after sending his plea for help to the Ottomans, Bahadur Shah had suddenly died. *His successor had become an ally of the Portuguese* and refused to provide basic supplies to the Ottoman ships. Admiral Suleiman Pasha furiously ordered his forces to turn back.

In 1551, Sultan Suleiman sought to remove the Portuguese hold on the Strait of Hormuz that continued to hamper the Ottoman State's Eastern trade. This time, however, he entrusted the naval forces to Admiral Piri Reis. Reis was a renowned seaman and a pioneer in mapmaking (he is reported to have *made the first accurate map of the world in which he included parts of the Americas*, a fact which Western historians seldom report). Reis did succeed in capturing Muscat and loosened the Portuguese hold on Hormuz, but could not capture the fortress.

Suleiman next ordered Murad Bey to the Strait of Hormuz. He failed. So he ordered Sidi Ali Reis to try again. Though he was of a formidable naval ancestry, Sidi Ali Reis himself leaned more towards spiritual pursuits than military. He was a

distinguished writer and poet (under the pen name of Katibi Rumi), and deeply into astronomy, theology, mathematics. Though his heart was not on these military operations, he did try, his fleet suffered losses in their engagement with the Portuguese, but he did win through all the way to the coast of Gujarat in India. But then he gave vent to his spiritual side, traveled by land through India, Uzbekistan, Transoxiana and Persia, writing journals and poetry. Surprisingly, he was rewarded by Suleiman for these efforts, not punished for dropping out of his military assignments.

There was to be another "brief campaign ... forced upon Suleiman east of the Suez." This was in Abyssinia, whose Christian ruler had become an ally of the Portuguese. The Portuguese saw this as an opportunity for further gain in the Middle East and promptly sent an armed force. With the Abyssinians as their allies, the Portuguese waged small wars in the outskirts of the Ottoman lands. Suleiman finally decided to act. He sent a force in 1557 to boost the local tribesmen under attack from the Christian forces, captured the Red Sea port of Massawa, thereby reducing the power of the Portuguese in the area and ending any threat from Christian Abyssinia to that fringe of the Ottoman domain.

## (11)

Europe persisted periodically with fresh Crusades. In the Mediterranean, Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire died in 1558. In Spain, Philip II, his son and successor, launched an even more ferocious campaign to exterminate Moriscos (Muslims converted to Christianity). And he assembled a large fleet at Messina to launch another Christian Crusade by invading Tripoli. But an Ottoman fleet was waiting for them under the command of Dragut, the successor of Barbarossa. The panic-stricken Christian fleet suffered heavy casualties, fled with what remained, to Italy, while the Turks followed up on their success not only by establishing control over almost all of Northern Africa, but venturing past the Straits of Gibraltar to reach the Canaries and to the cargoes of treasures the Spanish were accumulating there from their New World conquests.

The island fortress of Malta was once more a problem for the Turks. The Knights of St. John, who had suffered great losses since they had occupied Malta, had recommenced their piracy. They pirated a large Turkish merchant ship en route from Venice to Istanbul with a valuable cargo of luxury goods. Kinross reports that Suleiman's minister Dragut informed Suleiman that immediate action was needed to "smoke out this nest of vipers" in Malta.

The Ottoman forces arrived at Malta May 18, 1565. Bloody battles ensued, both Christians and Muslim forces of course exhorted by their leaders to fight the other for their "religion" and "martyrdom." The Knights' leader Jean de la Valette attempted to fire up his troops: "Today our Faith is at stake and whether the Gospel must yield to the Koran. God is asking for our lives..." he said. However, the Turks won the day. When the remaining knights offered to surrender, the Ottoman commander, remembering their double-cross after their surrender at Rhodes years before, set clear rules of the surrender now. De la Valette, hoping for

reinforcements, delayed on accepting the terms. Despite having total control now, the Turks hesitated to proceed on a decisive attack to destroy the remaining Christian forces. They allowed *two months* to pass; suddenly a large Christian fleet arrived from Sicily led by Don Garcia de Toledo, the successor of Andrea Doria as Imperial Commander of the Mediterranean for the Christian forces. The weary Turkish armada now found themselves facing a force of fresh troops. After fierce battles and heavy losses on both sides, the Turkish commanders returned to Istanbul with the remnants of their fleet. They had *not* expunged the Christian forces totally from Malta. That was, in effect, a defeat.

On May 1, 1566, the aged Suleiman himself set out for Hungary, for the last time. He said he wished to personally ensure that young John Sigismund would inherit the throne of Hungary as agreed, without more intrigue and double-cross. And he felt he had a score to settle with the Croatian commander Count Nicholas Zrinyi, who had become a common brigand against Turkish Beys (nobility), attacking them with his gang, killing them and carrying off their possessions, reports Kinross.

At Semlin, Suleiman received Sigismund, declared him to be like his own son, even granted a larger territorial allowance from Ottoman lands to the young king. Next he marched to Sziget to confront Zrinyi. The latter's forces were no match for the Turks, but before the final assault Kinross says Suleiman offered generous terms of surrender which Zrinyi rejected with contempt." The final assault that destroyed the enemy was fired on September 5; but the aged Suleiman himself had died quietly the night before.

( 12 )

As Suleiman "The Magnificent" was and is greatly adored by most Muslim historians and consequently by the Muslim public through the centuries, criticism of Suleiman is apt to be highly unpopular. Nevertheless, it is necessary to point out that while Suleiman achieved greatness himself and was responsible for considerable reform within the Empire, he was also responsible for setting the Ottoman State — and through it the Muslim world — on a decline. To understand how this happened, we need to consider the influence of that peculiar phenomenon in Ottoman history from this point onwards: the favorite concubine who would induce a sultan to appoint her son the next sultan, then continue her influence as the widowed Sultana Valide (Queen Mother). According to some Western historians (like Massie), the Sultans after Suleiman never married, just collected European concubines. They ranged from daughters of European aristocracies and Christian priests, to dancing girls and bath attendants. At critical stages, some of these concubines used their influence over their paramour (the Sultans) not only to select their own offspring as successors, but chose corrupt officials in collusion with Christian governments, and at times act as secret agents of the Christian World.

Suleiman was one of the early Muslim rulers, who was a very able leader, fought Christendom when he had to do so. But he clearly yearned to be accepted

by Christian Europe, and was willing to make dangerous concessions *like Saladin had*, in order to be liked by Christian Europe. It got him superficial flattery from them at times, but it got him used, always, and sometimes mocked. The ones for whom Suleiman, like his father Selim, bore almost pathological hate were not Christians, but Shias. Whenever he had a choice, Suleiman, like Selim, was far more willing to war against Persia rather than Christian Europe, and this, despite his own love for Persian art and literature.

Now, in his infatuation for his favorite concubine "La Rossa", (the daughter of a Russian-Ukrainian priest) he would select Selim, his degenerate offspring through this concubine, to succeed him, over his oldest son Mustafa. Mustafa, a far better alternative, trained from infancy to become Sultan, was so obviously the better choice that he had to be killed to avoid to avoid public backlash and future problems against Selim, a "tradition" not unlike like that prevailing in Europe.

Selim was the first of "twenty-five Ottoman Sultans, who...were to preside over the slow decline of the Ottoman Empire", says Lord Kinross.



## Chapter 15

# Intrigue: The Harem and the Crusaders

### (1)

In several reigns during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries there were the intrigues of *Valide Sultana* (Princess Mother); palace power games were played with such intensity in these years that they have been called 'the Age of the Favoured Women'<sup>1</sup> says Alan Palmer in *The Decline and Fall of the Ottoman Empire* (John Murray, London, 1992).

The seeds of the decline of the Ottoman Empire were sown *literally* and *figuratively*, by Suleiman himself in his infatuation for his favorite concubine. For several years, Roxelana, (known as La Rossa), the daughter of a Ukrainian Christian priest, had become not just his favorite concubine but in time demanded and received the status of a legitimate wife.

Historian Robert Massie (in *Peter The Great, his life and world*) says Roxelana was Russian, not Ukrainian, though "Russian blood was a mixture of Slav, Tatar, Balt and others"<sup>2</sup> and he claims Suleiman married her. He admits that Roxelana interfered so much in matters of state that after this awful example, the Ottoman sultans *did not ever marry again*. History of course shows that the sultans' concubines wield powerful influence not only in selecting successors but in government appointments.

After Roxelana had managed to replace Suleiman's previous favorite concubine Gulbehar and had borne him a child, she got him to give her the privileges of a legal wife, with a marriage portion, "as no concubine of an Ottoman Sultan had been for two centuries past".<sup>3</sup> She even got herself placed, along with her large retinue, in the Sultan's own palace. Having engineered the execution of Ibrahim Pasha, the Sultan's Grand Vizier and closest friend, she later had Rustem Pasha appointed Grand Vizier. Rustem Pasha was the husband of her own daughter. By this time

Roxelana had also borne three sons, Selim, Bayezid and Jehangir, and was determined that one of these sons must succeed Suleiman, says Kinross.

But Suleiman had already decided upon his oldest son, Mustafa, the son of Gulbehar, as his successor. Mustafa had been trained from infancy for the position. He was, says Kinross "a handsome young man of remarkable promise, marvelously well-educated and prudent and of an age to rule." The Janissaries were devoted to him, as he had shown himself to be a very able and likeable leader. But Roxelana set up a plan with the aid of her son-in-law, the new Grand Vizier, and somehow persuaded Suleiman that Mustafa was attempting to take his throne right now, with the aid of the Janissaries, just as Suleiman's father Selim had disposed of his own father Beyazid II. Suleiman was apparently convinced and decided to kill his first-born. He summoned Mustafa; rumors of Suleiman's intent had reached Mustafa but he refused to flee. Kinross reports that Mustafa said "if he must lose his life he could not do better than give it back to the source from which it came."<sup>4</sup> Mustafa was strangled, says Kinross, at Suleiman's orders.

To pacify the revolt of the public and the Janissaries against his obsessive reliance on Roxelana, Suleiman now sacked his Grand Vizier, Roxelana's corrupt son-in-law Rustem; when tempers had cooled, however, the new Grand Vizier Ahmet Pasha was somehow killed, and somehow Suleiman was persuaded to reappoint Rustem to the post. Roxelana herself was to die (of natural causes) three years later but by then she had managed to get Suleiman's promise that one of her two older sons would inherit the throne. Selim, the eldest, was an habitual drunk; Beyazid, the second, is reported to have inherited some of Suleiman's better qualities; the youngest son, Jehangir, died; it is reported that he had been devoted to his step-brother Mustafa; he had taken ill with grief at Mustafa's murder and died of natural causes himself as a result.

Now, believing that his younger brother Beyazid could be a threat as he was highly talented, Selim led an assault against Beyazid in 1559 at the command post at which the latter was stationed by their father. As he used Suleiman's own forces for this purpose, one must conclude that Suleiman was *not* against this action, though it is not clear what gossip Suleiman had swallowed this time against this son. Selim defeated Beyazid, driving him out of the empire; Beyazid took refuge in the court of Shah Tahmasp in Persia, where he was received with honor. Furiously anti-Persian (while deeply appreciative of Persian arts, crafts and poetry), Suleiman himself angrily demanded the return of Beyazid, which the Shah initially refused but later agreed to do. Beyazid was sent back to his father, but he knew what his father intended to do. Beyazid made a last request of his father that he be allowed to see his own sons before he was killed. This was denied. At Sultan Suleiman's order, he was strangled. And, all Beyezid's children (five of them, including one three-year-old) were also killed.

The way was clear for Selim to ascend the throne after his father, as Sultan Selim II or, as some called, Selim the Sot and Selim the Drunk.<sup>5</sup>

(2)

"Suleiman's passions, fanned by Roxelana, had overridden his judgment...to destroy at his death much of what he had worked for in his life." Selim was the first of "twenty-five Ottoman Sultans, who...were to preside over the slow decline of the Ottoman Empire" One of Sultan Selim II's first edicts was to abolish the restrictions on wine. Soon wine consumption was endemic in the court circles. The *mufiti* and the *qadis* (theologians) he appointed drank heavily too and were anything but religious. "It became a popular jest, inspiring the query 'Where shall we go for our wine today? To the mufiti or the kadi?'" While Sultan Selim II indulged, he left all matters of state to Sokollu Pasha a Bosnian Muslim, who turned out, fortunately for the state, to be a remarkably honest and efficient Vizier. There was an eight-year peace with the Habsburgs now, following a treaty in 1568, an agreement to accept status quo by both sides. And this was being honored. But trouble was brewing from the adventures of the new Grand Duchy of Moscow. Ivan the Terrible (so called because of his savagery towards his subjects) had assumed power in 1547, and he showed his intent to invade the south, aiming for the Tartar khans and eventually to recreate the glories of the Eastern Roman Empire (in the name of Christianity, he insisted). As Ivan proceeded with his invasions to his south, he blocked Muslims of Turkestan from travel, even denying them permission to proceed on pilgrimage to Mecca, killed many. In 1568, Sokollu sent a large force across the Black Sea to Azov. They were defeated more by the wintry weather than by the enemy. However Devlet Ghirai, the local Tartar leader, felt his Muslim forces could face the Muscovites better, and they did. They defeated Ivan's forces and soon Ivan agreed to a peace treaty, whereby the Ottomans retained their sovereignty over the Khanate of the Crimea, and renounced claims to Astrakhan. Turkey and Russia were at an uneasy peace for several decades, the Tartars knew the Russian were waiting until their forces were strong enough to invade. Eventually, the Tartars were conquered and brutalized.

In the meanwhile, Sokollu thought of ways to provide Turkey with greater security and wealth. Working on expanding trade with the East, he came up with the idea of a project that was, in the 19th century, the Suez Canal: "A canal across the Isthmus of Suez, in order to link the Mediterranean with the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean beyond"<sup>6</sup>. History would have taken an entirely different turn if he had implemented it and not the French three centuries later. Tragically, a major revolt in Yemen delayed the actual implementation of the undertaking, and another he planned. Next there was an urgent appeal from the "Moors" (the Libyans of North Africa) for help against the continuing invasions and tyrannies they were being subjected to by the Spanish and Portuguese. This appeal had a sympathetic reception from Sokollu and other Muslims in the court. But Sultan Selim's advisors did not want to fight for justice. His "influential favorite, a Portuguese Jewish financier named Joseph Nasi" who, along with another Selim favorite, Lala Mustafa "incited Selim to an invasion of Cyprus, whose rewards would be not only its fine wines but in equal abundance the gold ducats"<sup>7</sup>. In a drunken stupor, Selim not

only agreed but "went so far as to embrace Nasi" and promised to make him the King of Venice. Selim rejected Sokollu's pleas to help the Moors and insisted upon the Cyprus invasion.

The Turkish forces led by Selim II's friend Lala Mustafa, took Nicosia within six weeks, slaughtering garrisons and ransacking the city. They were reportedly ordered to collect local young men and women to be put up for slavery. Next, after a bitter struggle, the remaining fortress of Famagusta was taken by Lala Mustafa. In a peace treaty two years later, Venice ceded the island to the Turks. After the brutality of the invasion led by Lala Mustafa, the humane Sokollu managed to take over control and Turkish rule over Nicosia under his supervision was benign. "The Latin system of serfdom was abolished... the local inhabitants were assisted by the development of economic and financial resources" says Kinross.<sup>8</sup>

Pope Pius V however refused to accept the treaty signed by Venice ceding Cyprus and called for a Crusade. He set up what came to be called the Perpetual Holy League. It took time to form it, as Spain did not want Venice to become powerful, and Venice did not trust Spain and its political power. France was more suspicious of Spain than of the Ottomans, and in fact refused to become part of the League. In 1571, the triple alliance of the Pope, Spain and Venice, along with Italian states, the Knights of Malta, formed an Armada and set out under the command of Don John of Austria.

With the Christian powers with a combined Armada proclaiming a Crusade, the drunken Turkish Sultan Selim II and his court decided to arouse religious fervor among their own people, with fiery calls in the name of Islam! The perpetual Holy League Armada carried the papal banner with the figure of the crucified Christ, while the Turkish fleet carried a sacred Meccan standard embroidered with Quranic verses.

It was a historic battle for two reasons; one, for its enormity, its fury, the sheer brutality and the numbers killed on both sides; and secondly, because it led to a victory for the Perpetual Holy League forces, the first major defeat for the Turks.<sup>9</sup> This defeat was to have enormous psychological consequences. The Turks did regroup the following year, this time the Christian forces recognized that their forces would be easily defeated, and the "Perpetual Holy League" itself was already cracking, with hostilities between its parties. So they signed a peace treaty with Turkey, ceding Cyprus, and eagerly accepted the resumption of trade. *But their initial victory had convinced Christendom that the invincible Turks could be defeated.*

The Turks eventually helped the North African Muslims, obliquely, a few years later, when they captured northern African states which Spain and Portugal had conquered. Tunis, Algiers and Tripoli became Ottoman provinces. In 1578, the Portuguese landed in Morocco, the Sheriff of Fez beggled the Ottomans for help, they came, the Portuguese armies were thoroughly crushed and their King Sebastian, who led them, was killed. This defeat signaled the decline of Portugal's colonial aspirations. King Philip of Spain soon took advantage of Portugal's weakened state and proceeded to an armed occupation of that country himself.



Sultan Selim the Sot died shortly thereafter. Frightened by natural disasters which the *ulema* (Muslim theologians) said were God's fury against his dissolute reign, he drank even more. The *ulema* prayed that he might die a fiery death soon and it was said their prayers were answered. His wine cellars at Seraglio caught fire while he was there, he fell, cracked his skull and died.

## (3)

Selim's son became Sultan Murad III. And by what was now becoming a family tradition (like several European monarchs who promptly ordered the beheading of all rivals), Murad proceeded to ensure the security of his throne by immediately ordering the death by strangulation of his own five brothers. It is suggested by some that his Venetian mother had something to do with this decision. Murad was not a drunk like his father. His excesses were women and gold, not wine, and "he led a life of indolent self-indulgence" as Kitross puts it. He was chiefly ruled through the intrigues in his harem. His Venetian mother Sultana Valide (Queen Mother), ruled him in his earlier years. His sister did too. But the greatest continuing influence was that of his Venetian "wife", his concubine Safiye, the daughter of the noble Baffo family. She competed with the Sultan's mother, the Sultana Valide, for control of Murad III. His mother attempted to tempt him away from Safiye's influence, says Kitross, "to direct his desires into more *promiscuous* channels, and he plunged into a life of license, requiring the services of two or three concubines in a single night. This doubled the price of girls from the slave market of Istanbul, and enabled him to sire more than a hundred children."<sup>10</sup> A Hungarian concubine captured his attention, then another concubine Janfeda, whose power his Venetian mother sought to increase. But it was the Venetian Sultana Safiye who continued to hold the greatest influence. *Murad's Venetian mother did not like that as Safiye would get credit, not she, for swaying the Sultan in favor of Venice.* "Indeed Venice obtained from the Porte the renewal of capitulations and other commercial advantages. Sultana Safiye's influence was to prevail equally as Sultana Valide [Queen Mother] over her son Mehmet III in the next generation."<sup>11</sup>

## (4)

The empire's European frontiers had been relatively free from any attacks at this time. "This was due to the fact that [Christian] Europe was divided, both in religion and politics, first by Counter-Reformation, then by the Thirty Years War. In the course of this conflict there were, on the contrary, moves by [Christian] Europe to seek support from the Turks... the first sure sign of this had been the signature, in 1606... of the Treaty of Zsitvatorok, between the Ottoman and Habsburg empires." Until now, however, treaties usually had the traditional wording expressly conceding the accepted superiority of the Ottoman empire over the European powers; "previous treaties with the Christian emperor had embodied the formula 'Graciously accorded by the Sultan, ever victorious, to the infidel King of Vienna, ever

vanquished', but now in a new atmosphere of cordiality, the treaty specified that "The Emperor and the Sultan shall treat [each other] on a footing of equality" (Kinross). To cement this new cordiality, Murad signed more "capitulations" (i.e. trade concessions).

Peter Mansfield (*A History of the Middle East*) reports that Special "Capitulations", i.e. full trade and religious freedoms had been granted to Christians since 1535 by the Ottoman sultans, commencing with Suleiman the Magnificent to Francis I of France. "In the mid-eighteenth century, these privileges were [also] confirmed and extended as a reward for French diplomatic support in negotiations with Austria. The extraterritorial privileges created by the Capitulations were remarkable. Special consular courts had complete jurisdiction over the nationals of the countries concerned. Non-Muslim foreign nationals living in Turkey were not subject to Ottoman law, however grave the crimes they may have committed... Russia claimed similar rights over Orthodox Christians in the [Ottoman] empire."<sup>12</sup>

While Suleiman had first allowed "Capitulations" to Christian Europeans in 1535, (in fact his father had already begun this practice of giving "concessions") this had been as a grand gesture of the Sultan's "magnanimity." Now the Christians were not to be subject to Turkish law even in criminal cases, reports Mansfield. This set a precedent that all Europe sought to make permanent. In 1579 King Henry II of France sought to get closer to Murad III, sending high-level aristocracy as ambassadors in a renewal of the Turko-French alliance, and obtained French protection over the holy places in Jerusalem and over all Christians in the empire, including Christians who were English, Portuguese, Spanish and others "who have walked under the banner of France, from olden times until the present day"<sup>13</sup>. What did Turkey get in return? Personal to the Sultan and his closest associates, benefits carnal and monetary, which did not reach the national treasury.

The English, watching this, hungering to establish direct relations with the Ottoman state. Queen Elizabeth of England sought commercial advantage directly, permission for English vessels to navigate and have commerce within the Ottoman empire, under English flag, (not under the French flag, as they had to do currently). The growth of Portuguese control over the Cape of Good Hope, made it difficult for England to trade with the wealthy East through that route. Also England's established practice of piracy was becoming more difficult for the English not just with Spain but everywhere in Europe; having the Ottomans as patrons of England would deter other European nations from punishing England for its piracy. Elizabeth's imprisonment and beheading of her own cousin Mary, Queen of Scots, a Catholic, her wars with France and Spain, had also made Elizabeth unpopular in the Catholic world, and she now turned to seek Sultan Murad's friendship and the riches this could bring to England. Elizabeth's advisors knew that the sultan's advisors would be suspicious about why this Christian Queen was so keen to be friendly with the Muslim sultan. So Elizabeth pleaded in her letter to the Sultan that she was a sincere friend, they had common enemies, that she was a "defender of the true faith against the idolaters [Catholics] who falsely profess the name of Christ" especially "that arch-idolater the King of Spain" writes Kinross.<sup>14</sup> Note

that this was the same Elizabeth who had sworn to her sister Mary (when seeking to be appointed her successor) eternal loyalty to Catholicism

Sultan Murad III fell for it. In 1575, Sir Edward Osborne and Richard Staper, whom Elizabeth called two merchant "princes" in her communication to the Sultan, were sent as her emissaries to Turkey, begging access to the Sultan's dominions. This was favorably received by the Sultan, and in 1578 Osborne was sent by Elizabeth as the first ambassador. He won freedom of trade from the Turks, despite strong French opposition. A treaty was signed in 1580 giving the English similar "Capitulations" as the French enjoyed. Murad even wrote to Elizabeth praising her looks in glowing terms (one must presume that Elizabeth had not sent a portrait of herself to him but had been described by her emissaries), assuring her that her subjects were most welcome to come, and would have his personal guarantee against any trouble. In fact, the treaty went further; *if an Englishman was imprisoned in Turkey, for any reason, he should be immediately released*; Turkish sailors were to help English ships in distress.

The moronic Sultan did not realize that this ensured that any English pirate operating in the Mediterranean *had to be saved by the Turkish sailors if they were caught*. All Murad wanted in return, according to Kinross, was to purchase military equipment *to fight the Persians*. France, upset at concessions granted to England, had balked at selling arms to Istanbul. So Murad sought English war arsenals.

In retrospect, among the many foolish decisions of the Ottoman sultans of this era, failure to set up an updated military industry of their own had far-reaching consequences. *It was the one superiority Christian Europe now possessed*. The English, like the French, were constantly at war and constantly sharpened their military skills and military production. *Turkey bought arms from England now and in return, it allowed the Levant Company to be formed in 1581, granting the English a renewable seven-year trade monopoly within the Ottoman Empire*. England had established a foothold in Turkey. It was the beginning of the end.

Osborne became England's ambassador and a large English embassy was set up. Elizabeth sent gifts through him and through Sir Francis Drake (presented to the Sultan as a distinguished knight, though he was already a notorious pirate). The Sultan treated Osborne and Drake to a "banquet of 150 dishes." Baron de Gerigny, the French ambassador, was so angry at all the attention paid to Osborne, whom he called "a mere merchant," that he threatened the dissolution of the Turko-French treaty. The Venetians also complained bitterly about the new status granted to the English "pirates". The Sultan appeased them, arguing that the empire wished to be friends with everyone, and "was open to all who desired peace."<sup>15</sup>

When England realized that a Spanish armada was being made ready for a war with England, after England's incessant acts of piracy against Spain, it asked the Sultan to attack Spain as a diversionary tactic. Fortunately for Turkey, the Sultan's advisors prevailed upon him not to do so. Once Spain's armada was defeated however, the Ottomans were shocked to find English pirates (called "privateers" because they served the Queen) make raids upon Mediterranean trading vessels, including those of Turkey! *And the Sultan had promised to protect English sailors*.

Noting how gullible the Turkish Sultan was, France's Henry IV also sought the Sultan's military help "against his internal Catholic enemies, the Guises, whom Philip of Spain supported." Again the Sultan's advisors ensured that "but no such Turkish armada materialized."<sup>16</sup>

## (5)

When Sultan Mehmet III ascended the Turkish throne in 1595, Elizabeth sent a shipload of gifts. So English trade increased, even though the Turkish economy was now in even greater trouble. The sultans were so convinced Christian Europe was now a true friend, that they let their military preparedness to decline even more. Turkey casually bought arms from Christian Europe now, refused to update its own arms manufacture and the main arms it now bought was to prepare for *more wars with Persia*. "The sea power of the Turkish Empire had had its day, killed, as has been said 'not by war but by its peace with Spain'". Torture and massacre of the Muslims in Spain continued, of course. But the Ottomans were convinced Europe was their friend.

In their rivalry to squeeze more advantage from the weakened and simple-minded Ottoman Sultans, the English and the French were more hostile to each other than ever. The English Ambassador Henry Lello complained bitterly that "The French Ambassador with his great bribes, receiving now the Pope's pay, spares nothing to hinder all my designs." At a friendly gathering, where a snowballing game was being played, the Venetian Ambassador reported "a violent quarrel arose between the households of the French and English Ambassadors. Several were badly wounded, and had not night fallen worse would have happened for the Ambassadors themselves began to take part [in the fighting]".<sup>17</sup>

The Dutch were tempted to seek their own fortune from Turkey. In 1601, the English had prevailed upon the Grand Vizier to insist that the Dutch should sail to Turkey under Queen Elizabeth's flag (just as the English had done under a French flag earlier), but by 1612, the Dutch got their own "Capitulation" treaty. *As part of the trade the Sultan allowed the Dutch to introduce tobacco into Turkey, despite the objections of the Turkish religious leaders, who ruled that the European corruption, through the sale of coffee, wine, now tobacco and soon opium represented "the four pillars of the tent of debauchery" and "the four ministers of the Devil*.

These Capitulation giveaways naturally caused further drains upon the Ottoman treasury, which received no monetary benefits from the huge trade now being grasped by Christian Europe. Murad III's lust for gold and extravagance drained the treasury even more. The Sultan himself was soon inviting huge "donations" from petitioners for himself. Now, noting the need for additional revenues and the critical need for more land, (the population of the Empire had doubled just in the sixteenth century) and the ease with which anti-Shia hate could be generated, fiery religious feelings were aroused for a new invasion of Persia. Shah Tahmasp of Persia had just died and this seemed the right time to do so. With arms and ammunition bought from the English manufacturers, "In 1578, an Ottoman



invasion was launched without warning"<sup>19</sup>. The Ottomans first attacked and conquered most of Georgia, which was mainly Christian but allied with Persia. Now they penetrated into the shores of the Caspian Sea. "The Persians resisted for twelve years, but finally succumbed...ceding Georgia, Azerbaijan, Shirvan, Tabriz among other provinces. The Turks established a fortification at Kars, which was to be critical for centuries to come."<sup>20</sup>

"But the occupied provinces were hard to hold. Most of the populations [of the conquered territory] were Shi'ites by religion and thus remained loyal to the Persian regime" (ibid). And the Ottoman Empire's finances after this expensive invasion of Persia were in such a dire state that gold coinage was devalued by 50% in 1584. Unemployment and poverty were rampant. Money lending at usurious interest rate prevailed. The Sunni-Shia wars provided non-Muslim Turks and European moneylenders additional fortunes. Muslims were forbidden by Islam (and Turkish law) to indulge in usury so they could not gain from it.

The Ottoman justice system was by now corrupt, desperate to win favor with the powerful for its own safety. The empire was close to bankruptcy, unable to pay even its armed forces. The huge expenses in buying arms from Europe and in waging this long war against the Persians had entirely destroyed the Ottoman treasury. *The practice of granting European Christian businesses freedom to trade and yet not be subject to taxes in Turkey drained the Treasury even more.* It made Europe wealthy but gave nothing to Turkey. Turkey's populace everywhere was rising in revolt at these blatant injustices.

And there was a change in that peculiar institution, the Janissaries. From the perspective of our times, we would see this institution as extremely cruel and abominable. What makes it even more difficult to understand is that by now *not only were Christian parents entreating the authorities to select their boys for the Janissaries, but so were Muslim parents demanding that the institution be opened to their sons too.* In the past they were recruited exclusively from Christian families, trained from childhood to loyalty for the sultan. From Selim II's reign onwards, however, more and more Janissaries were Muslim-born, not converts. By Murad IV's reign, the quota system of recruiting Janissaries from Christian and Muslim families was discontinued. This made the Janissaries develop integrity, become less servile. They even stormed the government sessions, demanding an end to corruption. But they did not question the Sultan's own luxurious waste, but found fault with two Grand Viziers, one after another. He sacked them. The sultan knew their loyalty to him was critical. In 1593 when the sultan's own cavalry revolted, the Janissaries put the revolt down.

There were the usual revolts in Bosnia from the populace seeking independence. The Bosnians by now were committed Muslims, conducting their own researches into Islam, and contributed some very able administrators to the Ottoman regime. But they sought self-government. There were other revolts by irregular infantry and cavalry in Eastern Europe. There were revolts from various segments of the Asian segments of the Ottoman State.

In 1603, Shah Abbas of Persia, convinced that the time was ripe to regain the territories captured by the Turks, launched an attack. The Turkish forces were unable to withstand the attack; Tabriz, the Persian capital, was recaptured by 1612, almost all of the territories captured by the Turks in 1590 were retaken by the Persians.<sup>21</sup>

In the meanwhile, Sultan Mehmet III followed his father's example, had "nineteen brothers strangled by mutes...six pregnant slaves ... had [also been] sewn up in sacks and thrown into the Bosphorus, lest they give birth to claimants to the throne. Later Mehmet put to death his own son Mahmud" reports Kinross. Like his father, Mehmet III had fallen "under the domination of his mother, the Venetian favorite of his father." This was Safiya, of the Venetian Buffo family, the concubine who had ruled Mehmet III. She was now Sultana Valide (Queen Mother).<sup>22</sup>

In 1596, noting the disturbances and weaknesses within the Ottoman State, there were insurrections in Europe against Turkey. "Weakling as he was", a nervous Mehmet III was persuaded that his unpopularity within the State might be reduced by such taking arms against the Christian invaders, especially among the religious elements in the Empire who were furious with his immorality. With great pomp he ordered that Prophet Muhammad's own standard be brought from Damascus for the first time, to lead the Ottoman's forces. After initial reverses, Mehmet III attempted to turn back along with some deserters, but was forced to remain. It was the Christian forces' greed which turned the tide in favor of the Turks. After initial victories, "The Christians broke ranks to plunder the enemy's camp. At this moment the Turkish cavalry charged and they [the Christian forces] fled before it in total disorder... It was a decisive Turkish victory which at a perilous moment indubitably saved the Ottoman Empire. Bulgaria, Macedonia, half of Hungary and... most of the territories north of the Danube... [were saved] ...Sultan Mehmet, who had at least served as a spectator to his victory, returned with relief and in triumph to an ovation in Istanbul. Here he relaxed as before amidst the pleasures of his harem, leaving the direction of affairs to his Venetian mother. At the end of October 1603, he reportedly met a [Sufi] Dervish who prophesied that within fifty-five days a calamity would overtake him."<sup>23</sup> He died fifty-five days later.

### ( 6 )

Ahmed I, his son, became Sultan at age 14, and died in 1617, at the age of 27. For fourteen generations now, the Sultanate had been made a dynasty from father to son (a practice, incidentally, entirely contrary to Islam). His imbecile brother Mustafa I, who had been put away in a dungeon by his brother (Ahmed is also reported to have twice considered killing him off), was now brought out of the "Cage" and placed on the throne. But soon it was apparent he was in no condition to rule. He was replaced by Ahmed's 14 yr. old son Osman.

Young Osman became Sultan with aspirations to emulate his ancestor Suleiman the Magnificent. The Crimea Tartars were again under attack in the Caucasus.

This time it was the Cossacks of the Ukraine (who were Polish subjects) who came periodically to loot. Osman assembled the largest army since Suleiman, and marched to war. But it was a disaster as a result of the wintry weather, rebellious soldiers, and old weaponry. He sued for peace with Poland, and faced even greater agitation at home from this abortive military campaign and its expenditure. More arms purchases were needed from Europe.

Osman decided that an indigenous force of various ethnics should be created so that the Janissaries could be demolished. Some thousands of troops were collected comprising Kurds, Egyptians and Syrians. In 1622, under cover of proceeding to Syria to suppress a Druze rebellion, but in reality it was to be a surprise attack upon the Janissaries. Osman proceeded with his planned attack, but the ruse failed, the Janissaries came en masse to the Hippodrome, demanded the surrender of the ministers who had planned the action, even threatening the life of the Sultan himself, and demanded that Mustafa, the imbecile uncle, be placed back on the throne. They had Mustafa brought back, while his mother, the Sultana Valide, selected a new government in his name. Osman, who had fled, was captured, humiliated, as he begged for his life. He was imprisoned in the Seven Towers, where "one of his ears was cut off and dispatched to the implacable Sultana Valide [the mother of Ahmed I and Mustafa] who had ordered the execution... Though fratricide was a commonplace, this was the first act of regicide to taint the annals of the Ottoman Empire."<sup>24</sup>

Sultan Mustafa officially held that office for fifteen months, even though he was mentally retarded. The real ruler however was his mother, the Sultana Valide (Dowager Queen). Her allies were made Grand Vezirs in succession. The *ulema* revolted, demanded that an honest Grand Vezir be appointed. To placate the populace, Mustafa was again removed and Osman's younger brother Murad, aged 16, was made sultan in 1623, at age 16.

Murad IV is reported to have soon become "an Ottoman Nero" according to Kinross. Evliya Chelebi, the Ottoman writer and traveler who was favored at court reported that "Murad was the most bloody of the Ottoman Sultans."<sup>25</sup> His Greek-born mother Kosem (now Sultana Valide) held the reigns of government until he majored. In the meanwhile, Persia recaptured Baghdad, the Lebanese and Egyptians revolted, as did even the Tartars of Crimea; the Barbary Coast asserted its independence. The "marauding Cossacks raided the coasts of the Black Sea, penetrated into the Bosphorus and threatened the capital itself"<sup>26</sup>. In 1632 when the *sipahis* (police) revolted inside the Hippodrome, all shops were closed in protest, demanding the removal of seventeen favorites of the sultan's families and friends, including the Grand Vezir and the corrupt Mufti (religious head). By now Murad had attained majority and he took power, found killing was a pleasant pastime. What followed was bloody vengeance on his opposition, which soon led to a policy of almost reflex action against any and all who displeased him. "In five years, it is said that twenty-five thousand men perished at his orders, many of these by his own hand."<sup>27</sup>

In 1638 Sultan Murad started an offensive against Persia to retake Baghdad. When he did take it, "it was followed, on the Sultan's orders, by a general massacre of both [Persian] troops and civilians"<sup>28</sup>. In a counter-offensive, the Persians did recapture Erivan. In 1640, aged 28, Murad died. To appease the Muslim populace he had imposed strict prohibition of alcohol upon his subjects in recent periods, though he himself drank heavily "His end was hastened by debauches with drinking companions"<sup>29</sup> says Kinross.

Sultan Ibrahim, his brother now became sultan. Reportedly a weakling "an irresponsible voluptuary, fitful in temper, unscrupulous in character, and avaricious in spirit, he was ruled by his harem and by frivolous moods and desires."<sup>30</sup> One favorite concubine wanted him to wear jewels in his beard. He obliged.

The Cossacks (vassals of Russia) continued with their raids on the northern coast of the Black Sea, and now a large Turkish army aided by the Crimean Tartars sought to repulse the invaders and recover Azov, which had a critical location on the Black Sea. When the bitterness between the Tartars and the Cossacks continued, the Turks and the Russians soon found themselves in frictions, each insisting that their vassal state be kept in control. The Tartars insisted that any time they led their guard down, the Cossacks attacked. In the meanwhile, it was reported that Venetian adventurers had attacked and captured a Turkish galleon, ransacked its cargo. On board was one of the important ladies of the sultan's harem, with her infant child. A furious Sultan Ibrahim ordered all Christian ambassadors in his empire under house arrest. When told that the marauders were mainly French of the Order of Malta, he wanted war with France. His Grand Vezir soothed him down, proposing instead an attack on Crete. So in 1645 a Turkish fleet attacked and captured Canea, on the Crete western coast. The campaign dragged on for twenty years.

### (7)

For many years now the more sincere among the *ulema* had been angry at the sultans' lifestyle, their harems, their favorites, and the intrigues of their mothers, almost all European women who had managed to rule their progeny. But the "royals" held power, and Christian Europe which knew that a dissolute, extravagant Turkish ruler was to their great advantage. A corrupt Sultan's concubines and mother usually favored the country of their birth, encouraged him to give Europe more concessions. With growing public anger at these excesses, the *ulema* now decided to take a risk and act. They charged Ibrahim, the current sultan with debauchery, corruption, extravagance, and of being "unworthy" to rule. So great was the support from the public and the Janissaries that the Ottoman court found itself unable to quell the rebellion.

The *ulema* held a hearing in 1648, a sentence of execution was passed against the Sultan. He is reported to have pleaded for mercy, picked up the Qur'an to read it in an attempt to claim he was a true believer. But nothing saved him from the execution, the second act of regicide in Ottoman history. As this act was conducted through the *ulema*, it had a sobering effect on the government, and at least for a



while "absolute despotism of the Sultans was to be effectively modified by enlightened ministerial government."<sup>31</sup>

Following the execution of Sultan Ibrahim, with the ascension of the boy Sultan Mehmet IV in 1648, however, the power of the empire was even more firmly in the grips of the two Sultana Valides (Mehmet's mother, Turhan, and his grandmother, the infamous Venetian Kosem) each forming their own alliances. Then Kosem was killed and Mehmet IV's mother became the sole power. In the meanwhile, with the internal turbulence and the Ottoman naval power by now extremely weak, the Venetians were dominant, and they used this superiority to blockade Turkish territories, such as Crete. Also, these were European pirates attacking and stealing cargoes from Turkish merchant vessels.

Turhan, the Sultana Valide, recognized that the nation was about to drown in corruption and decided that a truly efficient Vizier was needed to save her son and herself. So she decided to appoint not one of her personal favorites, as before, but Mehmed Koprulu as the new Grand Vizir (the eleventh Grand Vizir in eight years). He accepted but demanded his right of freedom to act if he accepted the offer and the desperate Sultana Valide gave in. So the Grand Vizir was in effect to become the center of authority in the empire. Mehmed Koprulu and his son Ahmed (who became Vizir after him), are reported to have been the most efficient, honest and able leaders of the Turkish State, despite being hampered by corrupt regimes and their intrigues.

Koprulu decided that there was only one sure way to control the corruption that saturated the Empire and that was the trial and execution of criminal elements. Thousands were executed. However he is reported to have resorted to this extreme action not in anger or from the love of cruelty but "with shrewd calculation upon officials, soldiers, judges, men of religion alike."<sup>32</sup> Now that he commanded respect, he ordered the revamping of the armed forces, and soon he had cleared the Dardanelles of the Venetians. The entrance to the Straits was better guarded now, there was more vigilance over the ports and islands of the Aegean against pirates.

Koprulu believed that a revamped and better-trained armed force was essential to ward off the piracy and foreign encroachment upon the empire. And, aside from fierce action against criminals and political disturbances within the empire, especially in Asia, he set up strong fortresses against the Cossacks, reinforced defenses in Transylvania before planning fresh campaigns against Hungary and Austria. When Koprulu died in 1661, his son, Ahmed was appointed and he followed similar policies.

In the meanwhile Sultan Mehmet IV lived in effect as a figurehead, spending his time in his harem and hunting, using the services of thousands of peasants for his hunting expeditions. "While the Grand Vizir fought, the Sultan hunted. In the meanwhile, the force that [Grand Vizir] Ahmed led to Belgrade was the largest and most imposing assembled since Suleiman's time. It waged a campaign remarkable for the support given to the Turks by their Christian vassals in Wallachia and Rumania and by the Hungarian peasantry," says Kinross. The Turks were looked upon by these Christians as "liberators from Habsburg tyranny."<sup>33</sup>

Ahmed Koprulu's forces won victories in Hungary and Transylvania, and that spring, marched to Vienna. At the River Raab, the Austrians sued for peace "which was in principle agreed" by Ahmed. But after suing for peace, the Austrian cavalry suddenly took the Turks by surprise by attacking them. "It broke the spell of Turkish victories which had started in Mohacs in 1526."<sup>34</sup>

Military expertise and superior weaponry now clearly belonged to Christian Europe. "In the fifteenth century the Turks had soon perceived the value of cannon; even as early as 1453 a 'super gun' twenty-six feet long lobbed stone balls against the walls of Constantinople. But they did not maintain their lead in exploiting new weaponry."<sup>35</sup> A long period of complacency had set in as Turkey had been relatively at peace with the Europeans, because Europeans had been at war against each other in the recent Thirty Years' War. This incessant practice of warfare, along with the creation of more efficient instruments of death, now including gunpowder, provided Europe with increasingly superior military might. France and England, with their never-ending feuds and wars against each other, and in the colonies, were the most experienced at war, more powerful militarily than the others. The Turks had never set up an indigenous industry to make new weaponry, continued to buy arms (outdated by European standards) from England and France.<sup>36</sup>

Now, the Austrians received French auxiliary forces, "sent by Louis XIV in support of a papal Holy League"<sup>37</sup>. The French, while still officially not only at peace with the Ottomans but in an alliance treaty with them, felt that with their growing military strength, they could use Turkey and the Papacy to their own advantage. But Austria now sought to pacify the Turks. The new peace Treaty of Vasvar now signed between Austria and Turkey affirmed that there would be "no eastern extension of the power of the Habsburgs."<sup>38</sup> Koprulu, however, was more cautious than his predecessors in trusting treaties with Christian Europe.

## ( 8 )

Grand Vizir Ahmed Koprulu recognized that while internal problems needed primary attention, military actions abroad, an "imperial" policy like that of European powers, was essential to keep pace with the growth of European military power, especially with "a papal Holy League" appearing periodically to abort, at least temporarily, whatever peace treaties there may be in effect with Christian powers. Ahmed felt that Turkey should never again be taken by surprise when Christian powers broke treaties.

So now, in 1666, Turkey proceeded on a military campaign to complete the conquest of the island of Crete, which it saw as an important natural barrier in the southern Aegean against invasions upon the Ottoman boundaries. However "the Venetians, for their part, had the aid, in the name of yet another crusade, not only of papal [and] other Italian and Habsburg imperial forces, but of the French, who had secretly aided them from the start" writes Kinross. Among the attacks staged this amalgam of powers was one on Candia, "led by monks carrying a crucifix [which] killed a quantity of Turks before being overpowered and forced to retreat..

in the following year a more substantial French force sailed to Candia... this time under the papal flag... when this failed the French fleet joined the Venetian in a naval bombardment... this in turn failed... and the French, now in serious conflict with the Venetians, sailed away home with their army."<sup>39</sup>

Four days later, Candia surrendered. Koprulu Ahmed granted honorable terms "to the Venetians... [they] were allowed to take with them a portion of their artillery, while the Cretans were left free to seek homes elsewhere... Venice kept ports in the island, which otherwise became Turkish territory... *Its Greek Christian inhabitants welcomed the Turks as liberators from the repression of Latin Catholic rule; moreover, as time went on they became, to a substantial extent, converts to Islam*" says Kinross. In fact Greeks currently under Catholic rule, were soon envious of their fellow-Greeks who were under Turkish rule: "The Greeks complained of the incoming of an Italian priesthood and of Roman Catholic attacks on the Orthodox Church; they thought their co-believers enjoyed greater freedom of worship in the lands within the Ottoman Empire"<sup>40</sup> writes Alan Palmer.

Koprulu Ahmed is reported to have been "a strict Moslem" (though Kinross says he was a heavy drinker) but "free from fanaticism... protecting Christians and Jews from injustice." He attempted to combine the laws of Islam with the *kanun* of the sultans. He was a man of letters, who enjoyed the company of intellectuals, and sought to relieve the burdens upon the peasantry.

But internal reform was thwarted when in 1672, a new foreign campaign became imminent. Russia and Poland had been attempting to capture Cossack lands, in and south of the Ukraine, and divide them between their two empires. "The Cossacks of Polish Ukraine rebelled furiously, and were fiercely crushed by the Polish army. *The Cossack leader rushed to Istanbul to beg help from the sultan.*" The Cossacks, it might be recalled, had recently been invaders and plunderers of the Tartars until the Turks came and stopped them. Nevertheless, Turkey agreed to help the Christian Cossacks. With an ever more peculiar turnaround both the Tsar of Russia and the King of Poland were furious at Turkey's support for their former allies, and threatened a war against Turkey. The Grand Vizir wrote a conciliatory note pointing out that Russia and Poland had treated the Cossacks with "cruelty, injustices, oppression and exactions... if the inhabitants of a country, to obtain their freedom, beg for the support of a powerful Sultan, is it prudent to pursue them while under such patronage?"<sup>41</sup>

"When the king of Poland disregarded this missive, the Sultan in 1672 marched a substantial Turkish army through Moldavia to the banks of the Dniester."<sup>42</sup> The Turks captured two fortresses, Poland signed a humiliating peace agreement, ceding Ukrainian provinces to the Turks and the Cossacks, and agreeing to pay tribute to Turkey. In 1676 Ottoman power was established to the northwest of the Black Sea, and for some time, Polish and Russian designs on the Ukraine were ended.

Shortly after the end of this war, Grand Vizir Ahmed Koprulu died at the age of forty-two. There was much support for the continuance of the Koprulu family in the office of Grand Vizir. However Ahmed's own son was merely an infant, Ahmed's brother Mustafa Zade was a popular candidate but the intrigues within

the Sultan's harem had recommenced, and nepotism won. Sultan Mehmet now insisted on the appointment of his favorite concubine's brother, Kara Mustafa ("Black" Mustafa, so-called because of his swarthy complexion). "This created an 'interregnum' of thirteen years which set the empire on an irreparable decline."<sup>43</sup>

Kara Mustafa was licentious and corrupt; he is reported to have lived in pomp and extravagance with fifteen hundred concubines, with seven hundred eunuchs to attend them; he sold senior office positions, and, to soothe public indignation against his own excesses, professed to be a Muslim and opposed to Christian chicanery.

Within five years, Russia attacked and inflicted heavy losses on Turkey who were forced to relinquish their share of the Ukraine to the Russians in a treaty of 1681. But Kara Mustafa was keen to prove he was an able leader and looked around for some conflict in which he could prove it. There was a revolution in Hungary by the Protestants, "largely inspired by Protestant malcontents against Habsburg Catholic oppression. Its leader, Count Emerich Tekeli, ... appealed to the Sultan for aid." The Sultan agreed to provide help and recognized the Count as King of Western Hungary under Ottoman suzerainty. France's Louis XIV, as always afraid of growing Habsburg power, also agreed to support the Count," while his envoy at Istanbul promised to the Sultan benevolent neutrality, thus encouraging an Ottoman attack against Austria."

In 1683 Grand Vizir Kara Mustafa now issued an ultimatum to Austria through its envoy. Austria ignored that. Instead, Emperor Leopold used the religious card; he said his crusading force was "fortified by the promise of subsidies from the Pope" together with support from German princes and King Sobieski of Poland. In response, seeking to arouse support from the Islamic population, the irreligious Kara Mustafa announced it was now a *jihad* and amidst great pomp a large Ottoman force set out "in the name of the faith ... against Christian Europe... it included...engineers, tradesmen...pack animals—mules buffaloes and camels...such was the last great Moslem force to set forth in the name of faith"<sup>44</sup>.

Ignoring the advice of several senior commanders who warned against any direct attack on Vienna until spring, Mustafa proceeded to Vienna. The Turkish forces were provided with no heavy artillery and were battling defenders far better equipped militarily. Despite this handicap, the Ottoman forces made remarkable early gains, but soon more Polish forces arrived behind them. The Turkish forces were crushed between the two forces; even the famed Janissaries were helpless fodder for the enemy forces. The Ottomans were massacred, their camps raided. Kara Mustafa managed to escape with some money and some men, but the rest were either killed or taken prisoners, along with all their belongings. Among the spoils, the Austrians took "a large quantity of coffee, which led to the establishment of Vienna's first coffeehouse"<sup>45</sup>.

The Austrians and the Poles pursued the remaining, fleeing Turks. Mustafa for his part blamed the commanders for their half-hearted support of his plans, and proceeded to behead many an able commander. Soon, however, there was a



proclamation from the Sultan for the execution of Kara Mustafa himself, just as "he had executed so many others".<sup>46</sup>

Kara Mustafa's brutal excesses had been immediately used in Christian Europe as typical of all Turks "In Western Europe [there was] widespread belief that the Sultan's troops were a barbarian horde. In reality the Ottoman regular army was *no better and no worse* than other [European] campaigners. It was otherwise with their commander — Kara Mustafa... [He] was executed for his crimes by Mehmed IV. His decapitated head fell into Austrian hands." They exhibited it in a glass case. For "three hundred years ...the curious tourist could see it mounted in a glass case on the first floor of Vienna's *Historisches Museum*."<sup>47</sup>

There was great rejoicing in Christian Europe at the Austrian-Pole victory with the Pope leading the celebrations. The Pope then announced the formation of a new League. He "urged yet another — fourteenth — crusade to clinch it...his Holy League now sprang into life with the formation at Linz in the spring of 1684, comprising the three Christian powers of Austria, Poland and Venice — with the hope of additional cooperation from Persia." Just as in the past, Persia refused the Pope's invitation to join. The Holy League held for about five years but "as always in the past the political interests of the three soon conflicted."<sup>48</sup>

Encouraged by the Holy League, Venice invaded the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire in 1684. Its armies captured Prevesa, the island of Santa Maura, landed in Bosnia and Albania, a year later conquered Morea. In 1686 a German (Venetian) contingent captured Athens. These invasions were brutal, regardless of what they destroyed. "The Parthenon, *carefully preserved for two thousand years past, was hit by a shell*"<sup>49</sup>. A large part of the temple was destroyed "thus bequeathing to posterity a ruin. Afterwards the Venetians evacuated Athens for fear of reprisals from the Turkish garrison still at Thebes, but removed the *lion of Piraeus which now adorns, with a lioness from Delos, the Arsenal of Venice*"<sup>50</sup>. The Venetians did not wish to admit to having destroyed the Parthenon, so with help from a few "historians" it was soon claimed that *the Turks had ruined it*. In fact from the time of Murad II, an early sultan, who had voiced great admiration for the Parthenon, the Ottomans had ordered its careful preservation.

The Poles, thrilled at their new status of "Christian heroes," attacked Podolia, tried to capture Moldavia and Transylvania in 1686, but were unsuccessful. In the meanwhile, in 1684, the Austrians forces had occupied Croatia, soon annexed it as an Austrian province. And "in 1686, after a century and a half of Turkish rule...the city of Buda...passed finally into Hungarian hands"<sup>51</sup>. It was now clear even to the small European states that the mighty Ottomans were no longer invincible.

A year later, the new Grand Vizier Suleiman I led a large Ottoman army, which was destroyed, with thirty thousand Turks killed, at Mohacs by Charles of Lorraine. Most of Hungary was soon taken by King Leopold who appointed his son Joseph as its king. A year later Prince Ludwig of Bavaria captured Belgrade, then pushed the Turkish boundaries back as far as Nicopolis in Bulgaria, and Nish in Serbia.

These defeats led to mutiny in the Ottoman army, seeking better equipment and better-qualified officials. The army succeeded in having Mehmet IV dethroned

(though not executed) and replaced by his brother Suleiman II. This new sultan agreed to the appointment of Mustafa Zade, the third of the Kopruluhs "who had been passed over in favour of Kara Mustafa... thirteen years ago"<sup>52</sup>. The army and public indignation at the appointment of the Sultan's harem favorites had to be placated. The Court and Sultana Valide hoped that this Koprulu would be just as effective as the previous two.

Koprulu III, as the new Grand Vizier was now called, worked to replenish the weakened treasury with administrative reforms. And he proceeded to strengthen the armed forces knowing that Christian Europe was now determined to continue its attacks. In 1688 there was the English revolution, the conquest of that island by William of Orange, leading to hostilities and realignments among the European powers. William's Grand Alliance included the League of Augsburg, and they were soon at war with Louis XIV of France. "When The French ambassador urged Koprulu to refuse to recognize William of Orange, he rejected such a course, reasonably insisting that it was not for the Ottomans, who had so often dethroned their sovereigns, to contest the right of the English to dethrone theirs. He was, however, only too willing to oblige the ambassador in his second request, to make war against the [Austrian] emperor. In 1690, bearing the Prophet's sacred standard, he did so." By now, there was growing support for a *jihad*. After so many Crusades, clearly intended to destroy Islam and Muslims, they said a *jihad* was justified.

The Ottoman ally, King Tekeli attacked Transylvania. Koprulu himself "advanced into Serbia, recaptured Nish with other fortresses and a large stretch of territory, and laid siege to Belgrade, which capitulated."<sup>53</sup> He sent a small contingent to help Tekeli in his advance against the Austrians, returning home to a hero's welcome from Sultan Suleiman II. But Mustafa Zade Koprulu was not as wise as his Koprulu forebears. Flushed with success, he ignored the advice of his generals and having recaptured Belgrade moved up the Danube in 1691. The attack was disastrous for the Turk. Koprulu himself led a charge and died in the attempt. This destroyed the morale of the remaining troops who beat a hasty retreat; many were killed, and all their possession seized by the Austrians. More bad news awaited the Turks. King Tekeli had lost in Transylvania, had been forced to retreat and at home, Sultan Suleiman II had died at the start of the campaign. He had succeeded by Ahmed II.

In the meanwhile the Venetians continued with their attacks on the Aegean islands. In 1693, they, along with squadrons from the Pope and the Maltese, captured Chios, vital to the Turks as a defense base. By now it clear that while Christian Europe was advancing furiously, militarily, economically and into a civilized lifestyle, *the Ottomans were declining in all respects just as fast*. To the ambitious Tsar Peter of Russia this was his chance for glory.

Previous attempts by the Russians to invade had been effectively dealt with often by the Crimean Tartars themselves. But Tsar Peter was determined to stretch his Empire to the warm waters of the Mediterranean and now that the Ottomans were so weakened, he saw this as possible. He needed a powerful rationale for a *jihad*

invasion. So Peter called himself the Emperor of the "Third Rome", and "the new Tsar Constantine for the new city of Constantinople".

## (9)

To understand the phenomenon of Tsar Peter and Russian rulers who followed him, we should briefly review and understand the origins of Russia.

According to the award-winning author Robert Massie in *Peter The Great, His Life and World* (Ballantine Books, 1980), Christianity had come to Russia only a couple of centuries before the Mongols commenced their devastation. When the Mongol hordes descended upon the Muslim world in the thirteenth century, they also overran and easily subdued the primitive territories north in what we now call Russia. "The ethnic Mongol element of the state of the Golden Horde was mostly Tartars, speaking a language of the Turkish group. In the fourteenth century the rulers (khans) became Moslems," says Massie. It was under Tartar rule that Moscow was made the prominent principality of the area. The Russian empire comprised, eventually became an amalgam of ethnicities, with the Tartars a prominent element in the mix.

In the fifteenth century, a local chieftain of Muscovy had defeated the Tartar rulers, and his son Ivan ("The Terrible") set up Tsarist rule of sheer brute force, invading neighboring territories and reportedly killing thousands at home on whim, including his own son. When Peter became Tsar in 1682, he was just ten. Russia was run by his half-sister Sophia. Later they fought and he had her put away in prison. As Tsar, he traveled in Europe seeking to learn European ways. On his return, he began feverishly to turn Russia into a European state. He met with considerable resistance to many of his despotic orders. Beards were not "European" he decided. So Peter made beards illegal and ordered the beheading of those who refused to shave it off — two thousand guards from *Streltsi* or National Guard of Moscow alone were beheaded. Stories abound about his reportedly bisexual love life. Massie reports that he had his first wife Eudoxia Lopukhina jailed for life, while he took up with a General Menshikov. Later the two met a Lithuanian peasant girl named Marta, and they formed a *menage a trois*, had a few children between them; "Peter and Menshikov went into partnership on the matter [of Marta] as it were" says Will Cuppy *The Decline and Fall of Practically Everybody*<sup>24</sup>. In 1707 Peter decided to marry the peasant girl, changed her name to Catherine. *She was to succeed Peter as ruler of Russia, paving the way for her famous namesake, Catherine "The Great."*

Peter yearned to extend Russian territories down to the warm waters of the Mediterranean. But he knew of course that Russia could not achieve its objective on its own, without the active support of Christian Europe, including the Catholics. That support could only come if he announced he was invading on behalf of Christianity.

Like his forbear Ivan "The Terrible", Peter was enthralled with Europe, England in particular. Peter spent a vast fortune upgrading his military forces, training them

with the latest equipment from Europe, and ordering a large fleet of military vessels to be made at the famed Dutch shipyards. He used every opportunity to proclaim his admiration for Europe.

Until the seventeenth century, the Russians were such a minor military power that any problems that the Ottomans had with them, they left to their vassals the Crimean Tartars to handle. But towards the end of the 17th century, the Catholic Poles and the Orthodox Russians who had fought many wars against each other, (and with all that experience, become hardy fighters) decided, with Austria, to form an alliance in a plan to exterminate the Turks. The alliance now attacked the outer boundaries of the Ottoman Empire, the Crimean Tartars in 1677 and 1689. However they suffered severe defeats though their naval force made some gains. In 1695 Peter commenced a fresh assault on the Crimea. With the aid of Austrian, Dutch, Italian and English technicians, he had built a strong naval force with which he attacked four Turkish ports, later captured Azov. When the alliance now sued for peace, the Tartars and Turks were willing. That peace was to last until 1711. Peter in the meanwhile set his eyes on spreading his kingdom in the Baltic's, targeting Sweden.

## (10)

By now Sultan Ahmed II had died and his nephew, the new Sultan Mustafa II, started out with grim resolve to be different from his predecessors; he issued an imperial writ on reform, *Hatti-Sherif*, pledging also to be personally involved in any battles. In 1696 he had led a force from Belgrade to successfully defend Temesvar against the attacks by the Duke of Saxony. The following year, on a similar mission, however, the Turks met with disaster. Prince Eugene of Savoy "learning from a prisoner of war, under the threat of death" about the Turk plans, was able to abort an already confused Turkish plan of action. The result was that the Turks were massacred. "More than twenty thousand Turks perished, including the Grand Vizier, four other veziers, a large number of pashas, and thirty Aghas of the Janissaries. Another ten thousand were drowned...[Prince Eugene] captured, quite apart from money and arms, nine thousand wagons, sixty thousand camels, fifteen hundred heads of cattle, seven hundred horses — and the Great Seal of the Grand Vezir, the symbol of the Sultan's authority, which had never before fallen into enemy hands."<sup>25</sup> A devastated Sultan Mustafa retired away from leadership, appointed Grand Vezir Koprulu Hussein, the fourth appointment from that illustrious family. His main task now was to withstand the attacks from the Habsburg imperial forces that kept invading and capturing Turkish fortresses.

Koprulu Hussein was keen to end the warfare and concentrate on desperately needed reforms within; he built canals, schools, bridges, he attempted to improve the economic system, the armed forces. But he was also aware that Christian Europe must be appeased as much as possible, to avoid those perpetual wars, which were so costly. "Above all, he concerned himself zealously with the welfare of the Christian communities... the inhabitants of Serbia, and... Temesvar were given a year's exemption from capitation tax."<sup>26</sup> He may have shown this and



many other leniencies towards the Christians out of a desire to win their support in the face of Russia's obvious designs upon Turkey, but these and other tax write-offs to Christians in Syria and Rumeli punished the Turkish economy even more.

Europe was attempting to regroup now before launching another onslaught on Ottoman territories. Emperor Leopold was preoccupied with the War of the Spanish Succession, and he wished also to consolidate the territories he had already conquered from the Turks, rather than conquer more lands. Both Venice and Poland were exhausted and convinced that additional military action would be detrimental to their own interests. "Only Peter the Great... sought to prolong the war."<sup>57</sup> He went to Vienna to win European powers into an alliance to continue with the invasions. But another development thwarted his efforts. England and Holland had their own agendas.

England was concerned. A very weak and unfriendly Turkey would cause a decline in its commerce with England. And England's prestige had suffered from the Civil War at home. England also needed Turkey's continued help "in particular with the protection of English vessels against attacks by the Barbary corsairs." In fact these battles at the Barbary Coast were between the local pirates and English pirates. England's war against Louis XIV had now just ended and both England and Holland were keen not to allow France's influence over Turkey to exceed their own. Already "the war of the Holy League had seriously damaged the English Levant trade."<sup>58</sup> On the other hand, they also wished to ensure that Christendom did not ever consider them renegades from the Crusading cause. It was a tricky balancing act.

So the English and Dutch ambassadors offered themselves as intermediaries in arriving at a peace treaty between all the European powers and the Ottomans. In 1699, such a treaty was signed at Karlowitz, in Croatia. As always, Peter the Great was keen to be part of the European representation, even of a peace treaty with Turkey and he was finally included. Turkey and the European powers agreed to a treaty of twenty-five years and more, essentially agreeing that current lines between them would be respected. On some issues, Turkey was adamant; it refused to surrender the dethroned King Tekeli of Western Hungary and the European powers agreed to let Turkey keep him with his wife safely within the Turkish borders.

Peter the Great, however, sulked at the terms of the treaty "that allowed him only Azov and the adjoining districts already in his possession, and would sign no more than a truce for two years...he became embittered against the Habsburgs for 'taking no more notice of him than a dog', and leaving him to 'come off with empty pockets'".<sup>59</sup>

In the Balkans, the prelates sought Russia's help "against the Catholic Austrians, who sought to convert them from the Orthodox to their own faith," says Kinross. The local Orthodox Christians were more worried about the Austrian imposition of their brand of Christianity "rather than against the Moslem Turks, who did not seek to make converts."<sup>60</sup> Turkey in fact, after the Treaty of Karlowitz, sought to have friendly relations with Europe. The new Turkish envoy to the Austrian court went laden with gifts, while the Austrian ambassador to Istanbul was treated to lavish banquets. The English envoy Sutton was given a warm

reception by the Sultan himself. Only Russia caused alarm by sending its envoy on a warship, and fired a salutation of forty guns.

Turkey did succeed in getting Russia to sign a new peace Treaty in 1700. Count Tolstoi became the new Russian envoy. But Russia was *not* looking for peace with Turkey. Soon the Russians made demands in contravention to the terms of the Treaty, such as demands to use the Black Sea for their naval operations, but which Turkey insisted must be preserved "as a pure and immaculate virgin." In 1703, meanwhile, through more internal intrigues, Koprulu Hussein was forced to resign as Grand Vizier. Soon there was to be rebellion from the unpaid armed forces. Civil war almost broke out, as the army rebels were joined by students and religious elements. All of this chaos led to the abdication of the weak and ineffectual Sultan Mustafa II.

He was succeeded by his brother Ahmed III. On behalf of Louis XIV, now deeply into the War of the Spanish Succession, French Ambassador De Ferriol urged Turkey for a closer alliance with France, "pressing for its military support with a campaign against the Habsburg in Hungary. But Ahmed III, determined to seek peace, refused. There was a lull in Russian hostility now, as Russia was now diverted to a war with Sweden. Peter had created an alliance with Denmark and Poland and was involved in the Baltic War against Charles XII of Sweden. Russia wanted to appease Turkey for a while so "in 1705 it agreed to a provisional treaty in the Crimean zone."<sup>61</sup>

### (11)

The Turks were aware that Russia under Peter was rearming and reorganizing his forces furiously on Western lines and that he was as determined as ever to conquer the Ottoman State. Yet the Ottomans did not strike first, before the Russian had completed their mobilization, as one would expect any nation to do. This Turkish complacency was to be a fatal error. Western historians give credit for it to the Russian ambassador to Istanbul, Count Peter Tolstoi. Tolstoi, while he hated Muslims in general and the Turks in particular, was very adroit at pretending friendship with the Turks while he set up a spy network within the Ottoman lands among some cooperative Christian enclaves, within the Court and the harem. At the same time he assured the Turks of Russia's good intentions while Tsar Peter was rearming and retraining his forces.

In his tour of Europe, Peter had enthusiastically absorbed the basics of European political gamesmanship and how religious passions could always be aroused among the masses and thereby win the Church's approval for territorial expansion. Now, Peter used this at every turn. Peter had reportedly instructed Tolstoi when he sent him to Istanbul in 1701 to set up a spy ring and, says Massie, "do what he could to stir up trouble between Turkey and Austria, to gather and forward to Moscow information on the foreign relations and internal politics of the Ottoman Empire...to learn what he could of Turkey's military and naval tactics and the strength of Turkish fortresses on the Black Sea."<sup>62</sup> The Turks gradually

realized this, had resisted the presence of a Russian ambassador at the Porte, but thirsting now for peace, had been forced to accept Tolstoy's presence after the peace treaty of 1700. The Turks had known and been always suspicious of the activities of European ambassadors who, when caught, instantly claimed their spying was no more than their attempts to learn of Turkey's advanced systems. While this desire to learn from the advanced Muslim societies had been true in prior centuries it was seldom true any more. But the presence of these Europeans had to be accepted because of trade links; there were no such links with Russia at this point.

In his attempts to corrupt the Turkish Court's inner circles, Russian Ambassador Tolstoy worried (as he wrote home) that some of his own staff were becoming too impressed with Islam and a few had even converted. Tolstoy admitted in one letter that he *imprisoned his secretary Timothy in his own house and sent him to bed with a glass of wine when he learned that the secretary was about to convert to Islam*, says Massie. The young man was found dead next day. Tolstoy announced it was God, not he, who had punished the young man. "God kept him from such wickedness [conversion to Islam]"<sup>63</sup> he wrote home.

Quietly, Russia was having a new fleet of ships built in Holland. Tolstoy informed the Tsar that Turkey was gradually becoming aware that "seventy great ships have been built in Archangel and they think that when it is necessary these ship will come around from the Atlantic Ocean into the Mediterranean Sea and will sail up to Constantinople." In fact, by 1702, the Turkish fears of a Russian invasion were so great that Grand Vizier Daltaban Mustafa was seriously considering whether it might not be the best policy to conduct a preemptive strike at Russia before it had armed itself fully to launch its attack on the Turks. But Tolstoy's spy ring alerted him of this. This spy ring extended into the harem as well, among women who were Russians themselves or Balkan Christians. Tolstoy now rushed to the Sultan's mother (a Russian). "Tolstoy managed to bring the Vizier's scheme [preemptive strike at Russia] to the attention of the Sultan's mother and *Daltaban was deposed and beheaded*"<sup>64</sup> (Italics added). Tolstoy's soon became so brazen that he felt he could remove any Grand Vizier he disliked, despite the very cold relationship that continued to exist between the Turkish and Russian governments. Later he wrote to Moscow "This is the six Vizier in my time and he is the worst of the lot."<sup>65</sup> Presumably he was able to get this one removed as well but even the seventh was not to his liking.

By now, there was indisputable evidence that Russia was merely seeking an excuse to launch a war upon Turkey, which Daltaban Mustafa had feared. "Soon after his [peace] settlement with the sultan in 1700, the Tsar embarked on an alliance with Denmark and Poland on a Great Northern War, the 'war for the Baltic' against Sweden. The Swedes were soundly defeated at the battle of Poltava in 1709 and Sweden's King Charles sought asylum with the Ottomans *with whom he had omitted hitherto to establish diplomatic relations but whose sultan, Ahmed III, nonetheless received him hospitably*. The Sultan rejected Russian demands for Charles' extradition, but made it clear he had no intention of breaking his peace

with the Tsar to restore the king to power. *The Russians nonetheless violated Ottoman territory by a raid into Moldavia*" writes Kinross<sup>66</sup>. The Turks did extend full hospitality to Charles and his forces. "The religion of Islam imposed on [Sultan] Ahmed III the duty to receive and protect them [the Swedes]...within a few days, the Seraskar of Bender Yusuf Pasha arrived with a formal welcome and a wagon train of special provisions. Soon, the famished Swedish survivors were feasting on melons, mutton and excellent Turkish coffee."<sup>67</sup> King Charles was to stay on in Turkey for three years.

The decision of the Ottomans finally to go to war was precipitated by Tsar Peter himself. He demanded that the Swedish King be extradited, and his demands became more insulting. Then Peter then sent an ultimatum, demanding that the Sultan agree to the extradition of King Charles by October 10, 1710 or else Russia would invade. The Turks now realized they had no choice but to start to assemble their forces.<sup>68</sup>

In Moscow, "Peter solemnly proclaimed holy war 'against the enemies of Christ.'" It did not matter that the war had been instigated by Russia's own actions against Sweden's Christian king, or that Turkey was protecting this Christian King Charles from him. "The marriage of his son with the Princess Charlotte of Wolfenbuttel, had won him [Peter] another ally. And Peter was convinced that with his pronounced 'holy war', once he entered the Christian provinces of the Ottoman Empire bordering on Russia, he would be welcomed as a liberator"<sup>69</sup>. Already some Serbian chieftains had come to Peter, assuring him of their support in any invasion of the Ottoman Lands. In return they wished to be made rulers of Serbia under Peter's suzerainty.

Tsar Peter was convinced "now, in the spring of 1711, the hour had struck. In the Kremlin ceremony before he left Moscow, Peter issued a proclamation, presenting himself as the liberator of the Balkan Christians. He called on all of them, Catholic as well as Orthodox, to rise against their Ottoman masters and ensure that 'the descendants of the heathen Mohammed are driven out into their old homeland, *the sands and steppes of Arabia*'"<sup>70</sup>. In reality, Muscovite ancestry was even more mixed than the Turks. Over the centuries, as we have noted, the Sultans, their families, and other prominent Ottomans had married European women, often European royalty. As in previous centuries in human history, ethnicities often mingled and merged to create new ethnicities. This happened in the Turkish domain and even more so in what was now Russia. Peter knew that, but clearly felt "the sands and steppes of Arabia" would stir the right Christian emotions. Also, Peter knew how furious the church had been for centuries at the intrusion of Islam into Europe.

The Popes were really furious at their defeat in Bosnia. In *Croatia: Land, People, Culture*, (three vols. University of Toronto Press, 1964) Prof. Francis Eterovich and Prof. Christopher Spalatin reported the following: "The bishop of Zagreb, Simon Erdodi, states in a letter of November 24, 1536, that after the conquest of the city of Brod, on the Sava River, 'over forty thousand Catholics have embraced Islam and others change sides every day'. In 1613 the Jesuit Bartul



Kasic, after having visited Slavonia and southern Hungary, related to Pope Paul V that 'many Christians [Catholics] in these regions and also Bosnia have become Muslims'.<sup>71</sup>

"The papal delegate, Peter Msarechi, wrote to Rome in 1624: 'In the district town of Setjeska, in the past years, between six and seven thousand souls have fallen away from the [Catholic] religion'. That same year, the Franciscan Blasius of Gradac informed Rome that Catholics in the diocese of Trebinje 'already nearly all have fallen into Schism and Islam'.<sup>72</sup>

"The Croatian historian Ivan Tomko Mrmavic, who was originally from Bosnia, wrote in 1627: 'Speaking in general, two-thirds of the population in Bosnia are Muslims, and almost all of them were converted from Christianity to Islam'.<sup>73</sup> All Christian Churches was furious with this ongoing Bosnian and Albanian conversion to Islam. There would never forgive the converts for so thoroughly destroying the image built over centuries in Europe of Islam as a barbaric religion that could only appeal to the darker, inferior races of the East.

For secular needs, however, Christian states in Eastern Europe continued to turn for help and alliance with the Ottomans, as some western historians admit. For instance, Wallacia and Moldavia "had placed themselves under the suzerainty of the Sublime Porte [the name given to the Turkish government, from the building now built to house it] retaining their internal autonomy but agreeing to pay the sultan an annual tribute in return for protection." As we have seen, time and again, most Christian masses had favored Muslim rule, even fought alongside Muslims. In fact, in Corinth, "the Greeks were inclined to welcome the Turks as liberators from the Latin tyranny."<sup>74</sup>

On the other hand, there were princelings who weighed the advantages of alignment with Tsar Peter. If Peter promised more, they could always renege on their alliance with the Ottomans. In Wallancia, Constantine Brancova, who had become hospodar (the local name for prince) "who had come to office by poisoning his predecessor and had used his talents not only to cling to his title for twenty years but to build a powerful army and great personal wealth...[the Ottomans] had marked [him] for replacement once the opportunity arrived." So now Brancova "made a secret treaty with the Tsar."<sup>75</sup> In neighboring Moldavia, Demetrius Cantemir had managed to win the sultan's approval so such a degree that the Sublime Porte had indicated they might even make him ruler of Walancia as well, in place of Brancova. But now, noting Russia's growing power, Cantemir "began negotiating in utmost secrecy with Peter. In April 1711, he signed a treaty with the Tsar, agreeing to assist a Russian invasion and furnish 10,000 troops. Moldavia, in return, was to be an independent state under Russian protection. No tribute would be paid and the Cantemir family would rule as a hereditary dynasty. It was with the promise of help from these two ambitious princes, each of whom hated the other, that Peter launched his campaign against the Turks."<sup>76</sup>

Peter and these two princes, their entourage and their generals concurrently launched a massive propaganda campaign among their populace, invoking Christian sentiments. The Muslim barbarians, they said, had killed so many, raped women

and children, destroyed churches. So intense and successful was the anti-Turk campaign that the Moldavian masses "flung themselves on the [civilian] Turks in their midst... Many were killed; others lost their cattle, sheep, clothes, silver and jewels."<sup>77</sup> A short while before this, as we have noted, the Moldavian masses had passionately sought *continuance* of Turkish rule, but they now felt alignment with Peter would be the Christian thing to do! *It is impossible to tell how much of this "Christian" sentiment was due to the conviction that Peter would win the war and reward his associates.* Tsar Peter, brimming with confidence, marched towards the Danube to commence the invasion of the Ottoman Empire. When he "received two emissaries bearing an offer of peace from the Grand Vizier... Peter rejected the offer."<sup>78</sup>

As Russia had refused to withdraw its forces, the Sultan was forced by the tide of public opinion to declare war without further delay. So he sent a force to meet the Russians. With considerable fanfare, Peter now himself marched to meet the Turks. As the Turks crossed the Danube, Brancova became alarmed and decided to switch sides once again, but the rest proceeded. Quite unexpectedly, the Turks not only won a decisive battle at Pruth but they had Peter himself cornered, unable to escape and offering to surrender to any terms "except slavery" to save himself.<sup>79</sup>

The corruption which ruled in the selection of the Grand Vizier at this point had by now reached an absurd level. The man who had been recently selected, just prior to this confrontation, was a frail old man, thoroughly corrupt and, as events proved, yet another stooge of the Russians. Ignoring all the furious protests of his military leaders, Grand Vizier Baltaji "ordered the bombardment halted and sat down happily with the Russian envoy. Peter had asked his envoy to accept any conditions that were offered 'except slavery'" but Baltaji was much more generous than that. Baltaji merely asked the Russians to evacuate Poland, restore Azor and Tagonrog, agree that Swedish King Charles was to be allowed to proceed home unmolested, and that the Russian ambassador must stop spying all over Turkey! Charles, who rushed to the scene, begged to be given "a fraction of the Turkish army to pursue the Russians" Baltaji refused. In response to all the growing criticism of his terms among his generals, Baltaji claimed "it is against Mohammed's law to deny peace to an enemy who begs it."<sup>80</sup> As we have seen several times in the past, the Islamic directive is meant to provide mercy to an enemy *only* when he proves it is genuine and *not so he could regroup and try again, as enemies had done so many times in earlier Crusades.*

Several historians report that Baltaji was not only a close friend of Sultan Ahmed III's mother (a Russian) but that he was abundantly rewarded by Peter and Catherine (the servant girl, now his wife) with money and jewelry, though they differ on the amount of the bribery. *Russia, in fact, might never have emerged as a major world power in future years had Turkey's "Grand Vizier" decided to act morally at Pruth.*

( 12 )

Lord Kinross, a lifelong British diplomat, suggests that another reason why Tsar Peter was let off so lightly was because of pressure upon the Porte by England and Holland to provide "overgenerous" terms, and allow Peter to leave with "drums beating and flags flying."<sup>81</sup> English advice was invariably harmful to the Turks, yet – if Kinross is to be believed, they followed it again to their own disaster.

Sweden's Charles later complained bitterly to the Sultan about the ridiculous terms to which the Grand Vizier had agreed to free Peter who was committed to the destruction of the Ottoman empire. It was known, according to Kinross, that he had been promised 150,000 rubles by Peter, but it was now also said that Catherine had given a large fortune in jewelry to the Grand Vizier. Baltadji himself claimed he had wished to end the war with Russia in a hurry because he had been told that Austria was preparing for an invasion against the Ottomans, and fighting two wars would have been disastrous for the empire (a wholly different reason from the religious one he had given Charles).

The opportunity to defeat Peter thoroughly and end the Russian menace was never to return. With each future crisis, and Turkey's weakened state, Russia's morale received a boost, and won Peter support among European powers and among the Christian segments of the Ottoman empire, causing the standing of the Ottoman State to sink to a new low. In fact Peter added insult to injury, he even delayed his fulfillment of the very weak conditions imposed by Baltadji to spare his life. He did not surrender Azov and Taganrog until 1712. And Peter did not withdraw from Poland, as agreed, and so, in April 1713, Sultan Ahmed III declared war on Russia, demanding that the entire Ukraine should be ceded to Turkey and all of Peter's Swedish conquests were to be returned to Sweden.

But Peter knew that the Turks did not really want to go to war, continued to drag his feet. And he was right. Turkey did not invade. Instead lengthy negotiations continued, two new Grand Viziers came and went. In October 1713, the Treaty of Adrianople was finally ratified. And to the Turks' intense relief, King Charles of Sweden was finally able and willing to return to Sweden after *three years* in the Ottoman lands. The Ottomans had been the only friends to Charles in Sweden's desperate plight. By now, the Swedish army had been destroyed by Russia. And that was only one of many catastrophes facing that unhappy land. In 1709, the harvest in Sweden had failed. Denmark reentered the war against Sweden. Then, in 1710 and 1711, the plague swept through Sweden, Stockholm lost a third of its population. Sweden had no allies [except for the Turks], while ranged against it was the formidable coalition of Russia, Denmark, Saxony and Poland.

In the meanwhile, Tsar Peter, in his campaign to be accepted as a European cousin, continued to win friends in Europe of his time and among Western historians of the future. St. Petersburg, built on land conquered from Sweden, was now Peter's new capital and in between the wars he waged, Peter traveled extensively through Europe, learning about its culture, seeking effusively the friendship of the powerful.

King Charles, back in Sweden, realized that regaining Swedish land on which St. Petersburg had been built was impossible now. So he tried peaceful means to induce Peter to return Livonia, Estonia and Finland to Sweden which the Russians still held; But the unfortunate Charles' plans were ended soon. He was killed in battle against Norway.

( 13 )

Facts of history would be conveniently forgotten in later years, but at this time, as before, Greeks sought the protection of the Ottomans, preferred their rule to that of others, especially Catholic rule. This fact, like so many others, would be conveniently forgotten in future years.

Under the Treaty of Karlowitz, the Turks had accepted Venice's conquest of Corinth. But the Greeks of Corinth were entreating the Turks to come and free them from Venetian rule: "the Greeks were inclined to welcome the Turks as liberators from the Latin [Catholic] tyranny of their Venetian masters, to whom they gave no assistance" admits Kinross<sup>82</sup>. Recognizing that under Greek pressure for liberation, the Turks might act, Charles V as the Holy Roman Emperor signed a defense alliance with Venice.

The Turks did march into battle, but with haphazard strategy and they were massacred, with Damad Ali, the Grand Vizier, himself among the many dead. Temesvar, the last Turkish possession in Hungary was taken by Prince Eugene of Savoy and all the Muslims population there, who could not flee, were massacred. Austria followed up its advantage to conquer Belgrade, Bosnia, and parts of Walancia soon after.

As we have seen, even British historian and diplomat Lord Kinross records that England and Holland played a role in Grand Vizier Baltadji's ridiculously weak conditions for allowing Tsar Peter to escape with his life. Now, after the Austrian conquests, Kinross confirms that suddenly the English and the Dutch came into the picture, arguing that Austria had now the right to the conquered territories, as well as to Corfu, the Ionian islands, also some parts of Dalmatia and Albania in a new treaty of Passarowitz in 1718. It speaks volumes for the manipulative ability of the English and the Dutch that despite their clear pro-Austrian bias in these matters, they managed not to offend the Ottomans but in fact later even obtained additional commercial privileges for trade with the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans knew that in their weakened military and economical state, they could only appease and hope that the appetite of the European powers for Turkey's wealth would soon be satisfied. *They were wrong.*

From our perspective at the end of the twentieth century, reared upon history as taught by textbooks and visual media, we are apt to look upon the Ottoman state as an artificial entity created by conquests of what we believe to be "historic" Eastern European countries. The fact, as we have seen, was that boundaries of European lands were constantly being revised through battles and invasions, and after a time, those new boundaries were usually recognized and accepted. Even









Ulrike had resigned) sued for peace with the invading Russians. In 1721, twenty-one years of war with Russia was ended by a peace treaty; Sweden gave up Livonia, Ingria and Estonia to Russia.

A jubilant Russia was now convinced that Peter was divinely appointed. He had taken huge territories from the Scandinavians. Peter's first invasion of Ottoman territories had established a new chapter in Russian history. A Russian tsar had invaded the Balkans and he had not been required to pay with his life or indeed anything more than a slap on the wrist. And Peter had invited the Balkan Christians to rise against the infidel and welcome the liberators. This dramatic appeal planted the idea that Russia would act as Orthodox champion of the Balkan Slavs.<sup>2</sup> The Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Senate begged Peter to accept the title of Peter the Great, Emperor and Father of the country. He modestly accepted.

Peter died from what has been described vaguely as a bladder disease. Contrary to his impassioned public announcements when it suited his purpose, all responsible historians agree that Peter was not a religious man. He believed in Christ but he also firmly believed in dominating the Church himself as Protestant states now did in Europe. He had several mistresses and illegitimate issues. Prostitution was rampant in Peter's Court and all across Russia with, it is said, his implied approval. He is reported to have had crude personal tastes, and a violent temper (he killed his young son Alexis, while chastising him). When his mistress, now wife Catherine, took a lover, he had the lover's head cut off and placed in a jar in Catherine's window.<sup>3</sup> He did not, however, rescind his appointment of this former servant girl from Lithuania now named Catherine, as his successor.<sup>4</sup> An adoring Senate and public were willing to honor any of his wishes. Catherine's reign was not as noteworthy as her namesake of future years, though one of her children, Elizabeth, was also to rule Russia.

## (2)

In the meanwhile, the Turks continued to backslide; the decadence of many sultans, the dictatorial powers held by the favorites in the harems and the courts, the intrigues and corruption, made even the occasional attempts at reform by responsible appointees less than meaningful. The wars were very expensive, the sultans spent lavishly upon themselves, gave greater "capitulation" advantages to Europe on their own or through pressure of their concubines, all at great cost to the national economy.

Urgent reform was needed in education, in updating military hardware and expertise. But the Sultans continued to make concessions to European commercial interests and the Turkish treasury continued its downward slide.

A further problem was that the Sultans, in their eagerness to display tolerance towards non-Muslim minorities, had allowed the financial operations of the empire to fall in the hands of its minorities, the bankers of its Greek, Jewish and Armenian communities. As European commercial interests became more and more powerful within the empire, as new "capitulations" were permitted, and foreigners were

immune from Turkish law, Turkey's economy was headed for collapse. More and more money was borrowed from Europe's moneylenders at usurious rates.

The Ottoman armed forces required a thorough modernizing overhaul. European nations such as England, with their colonial adventures, looked upon military innovations and production as vital links to foreign policy. Turkey urgently needed innovations, but had allowed its military to become archaic. *The Janissaries wanted it that way.* Some in the Sublime Porte (the government) warned that innovations were needed but the Janissaries furiously opposed any innovations, *as that would make their own expertise obsolete.* Even the sincere among the *Ulema*, so often critical of the sultans' excesses and the control of European powers over him, feared change of any kind. They were convinced change would mean even greater change along the corrupt European living; and were convinced Christian Europe, being irrevocably hostile to Islam, would force destructive change if they could. Importantly, Europe's incessant distortions of Islam *made it dangerous as a source of education for Muslim youth.* As for the Muslim populace, they sought security for themselves and their loved ones that had been denied them now for centuries with the unending invasions, the massacres, and now the colonial exploitation. Their first priority was *survival* in an economy that was steadily plunging most of them into abject poverty. The passionate yearning for knowledge that had prevailed during and after the Prophet's era was now a *luxury* they felt they could not afford.

## (3)

Sultan Ahmed III is reported to have been a man of peace, a lover of art, poetry and music. The Ottomans had *not* faced major external attacks for twelve years of his reign so he could indulge his aesthetic tastes. He encouraged poets and artists, created gardens, palaces, and villas by the hundreds. For the first time, in 1720, the Ottomans had sent a special envoy to the Court of Louis XV, and his detailed descriptions of the beauties of Paris, its great advance in art and culture had impressed the Sultan greatly, so that now there was, in addition to Persian and Arab influence, French influence in Turkish architecture as well. Ahmed's father Mehmet IV had also loved gardens and flowers and it was he who imported tulips from Persia; now, as Ahmed created fabulous gardens with flowers of all kind, it was the tulip which was to become his favorite; his reign is referred to as *Lale Devri*, or the reign of the Tulip. *It was from Persia via Turkey that Holland was to take the tulip, and become identified in Western textbooks as the pioneer of the flower.*<sup>5</sup> There was now an automatic reaction against attributing *anything* positive originating in Muslim lands.

While these artistic activities added to the topographical beauty of Turkey and enlivened, even more, life in the royal courts, there was considerable public criticism at the extravagance especially with the national economy in doldrums. Paradoxically, recent sultans allowed Europe more and more generous leeway into Turkey's economy, yet remained ignorant of how Europe was changing from its

primitive past to modernity. Ahmed III was an exception. He was concerned that while Europe had been making enormous strides to move from its barbaric state into a developing continent, with innovations in every field of endeavor, Turkey had remained stagnant, even ignorant of the change, mainly because the Turks had been so convinced of their own innate superiority over the primitive Europeans. In fact, so contemptuous had the Ottomans been of Europe, that while the various European powers sent important, titled envoys to the Turkish courts, the Ottomans did not even have a representative at European courts. For the same reason, the Turks had never bothered to learn European languages, and had ignored the new innovations of printing with machines on a mass scale. The progress that Europe was now making in various areas was only vaguely known to the Turks. Even Europe's increasingly powerful weapons of mass destruction had come as a surprise to the Turks, who had been pioneers in the past. "In the fifteenth century the Turks had soon perceived the value of cannon; even as early as 1453 a 'super gun' twenty-six feet long lobbed stone balls against the walls of Constantinople. But they did not maintain their lead in exploiting new weaponry."<sup>6</sup>

In 1727 Ibrahim Muteferrika, a Hungarian Muslim, whose son Said had been to France and become interested in printing, sent a letter to Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha, requesting him to show it to the Sultan, in which he asks "Why do Christian nations, which were so weak in the past compared to Muslim nations, begin to dominate so many lands in modern times and even defeat the once victorious Ottoman armies?"<sup>7</sup> He pleads that Muslims should wake up from "the slumber of heedlessness... Let them be informed of the conditions of their enemies. Let them act with foresight, and become intimately acquainted with new European methods, organization, strategy, tactics, and warfare." He did receive permission to start a printing press, and permission to print secular books, such as dictionaries and books on the sciences. But the printing of the *Qur'anic* was still prohibited presumably because printing ink would contaminate *Qur'anic* words. With a committee of twenty-five translators, books were printed on geography, astronomy, physics, on medicine, on Aristotle and Galileo. Printing had been prevalent in Baghdad since the eighth century A.D., albeit in a primitive form. And it was Muslims, nearly a thousand years before, who had pioneered studies into these arts and sciences, and resurrected the buried Greek Thought, which the West had learned from Arabic and Persian sources. Now the very rudiments of this knowledge were to be taught by the West to the masses of the Muslim world.

"Almost incredibly, there was a total ban on [machine] printing in Turkish or Arabic. Printing was known because Jews, Armenians and Greeks began to introduce it from Europe from the late fifteenth century onwards to set up their own presses, but the religious authorities maintained the ban for Muslims. In 1729 reluctant permission was given for the first Turkish press to print books on subjects other than religion. By the time it was closed in 1742 it had printed seventeen books on language, history and geography. It was not allowed to reopen until 1784."<sup>8</sup> In past centuries, it was the Christian Church that had banned the acquisition of knowledge among the laity. In that era, Muslims were encouraged, by their

religion, "to acquire knowledge even if it be in China." Now it was the Muslim theologians (*Ulema*) in Turkey who placed restrictions on the acquisition of knowledge, out of fear of contamination by Europe.

"[Turkish employees] were usually illiterate and both unable and unwilling to learn foreign languages... the empire thus depended on Christians and Jews as interpreters... thus it was that the great movement of ideas in western Europe from the Renaissance, through the Reformation and Counter-Reformation left the Ottoman world almost untouched. *A fortiori* the same applied to Safavid Persia"<sup>9</sup> writes Mansfield (*A History of the Middle East*). Here was the ultimate irony. Steadily the Muslim world, until just a few centuries ago the citadel of learning where Europeans, including popes, had come to be educated, was now considered "illiterate" because most Muslims did not know European languages.

Of course there continued to be pockets of religious and literary advances in the Muslim world. Poets, philosophers, Sufi mystics in the privacy of their own little communities indulged in it, occasionally with a following in the mainstream. But this was an infinitesimal segment. In its permit to Europe's Renaissance, the Church had demanded that Europe give no credit to Muslim pioneers of learning from which that arose. Now Muslim mainstream stagnation gave the West opportunity to hold the Muslim religion responsible, to claim, with increasing blatancy in the future, that Islam discouraged, even forbade, secular learning and progress.

Why had the talents in the Muslim world become sterile, weak, after the burst of creativity and pioneering, especially of the first four hundred years?

#### (4)

Secular learning which Muslim youth now received from European books in bits and pieces never gave credit to earlier Muslim learning as the source from which Europe's fountain of knowledge had sprung. Now Muslim youth, as youth everywhere, learnt from these books was to reverse only the great minds of Christian Europe for their advances in learning, not the Muslim pioneers from whom Europe had learnt.

Alongside such secular learning in Europe, history was being re-written, first by the Churches, then by European laity, following a similar vein. This history made the Muslim the villain, the barbarian who spread his evil and man-made religion at the point of a sword, raping and pillaging everywhere. The religion of Islam, as always, was presented with the most ludicrous distortions (honest intellectuals like Buckle and Draper, among a few others, as we have seen, were the exceptions) alongside the glorious fantasies about Charlemagne, Richard the Lionhearted, King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. The era of great Muslim advances in learning had been when literacy, especially in Europe, was virtually non-existent, so European revisionists could now re-write history, complacent in the fact that at most only old manuscripts disproved their bald distortions, to which only the most conscientious historians had access, not the public.



In some ways the Muslim world was also to blame, in others it was in a bind, a victim of circumstances. The Muslim *Ulema*, with their internal animosity between differing Muslim schools of thought, made no united attempt at pooling knowledge and expertise about Islam or evolve a progressive system suitable for the times. Christendom had deliberately distorted history, taken credit for the works of Muslim pioneers. The Muslim world watched in frustration and anger.

But there was another problem, the abhorrence among the religious elements in the Muslim world to learn European languages, or even *one* European language. This was clearly shortsighted and foolish. Such personal familiarity would have allowed the religious to understand *in specifics* not just what they deplored in Europe's decadence, but the skilled cadence of Western Machiavellian politics. And, on the productive side, to understand the *beneficial*, the *innovative*, the *productive* advances which were pulling Europe from its primitive state to its new prosperity, and which would benefit the Muslim world to know and evolve, *in its own style, suited to its own culture*. European powers clearly did *not* really want the Muslim world to participate in reforms that would strengthen the Muslim world, but a better understanding among the *Ulema* of the productive aspects of the changes in Europe would have been a powerful force against Europe-imposed selective reforms in the Muslim world.

Perhaps it is worth reiterating why the *Ulema* shied away from this pursuit. Aside from the European lifestyle that, despite the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, was, from Islamic standards, grossly decadent, there was the never-ending hostility of the Christian world towards Islam, just as bitter now as ever. To tolerate the religion of Islam, the Christian Churches would have to concede that it was acceptable to believe in Jesus as a great prophet and not Son of God. That alone was intolerable for the Church to accept, after the massive genocide it had indulged in, for centuries, before the concept of Trinity was officially accepted by the "legitimate" Churches at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD. Though the extent of the distortions and ridicule of Islam in Europe would not have been known to the *Ulema* or even the lay Muslim public, as they did not read European languages, whatever little that they heard and saw in Europe's policies was enough to make them furious. How could they, Muslim theologians, allow Muslim youth to be exposed to this degradation, to be educated by those who hated Islam and Muslims so much? There were the glaring, frequent examples of how such propinquity had seduced the Sultans and the Shahs, most having Christian concubines whose offspring they designated the next sultans; the sultans lived degenerate personal lives, seduced into decisions that were destroying the Muslim world.

How then could Muslim students acquire higher education under the emerging Christian European system? *Such education would be a package*. You could not separate the good from the ugly. *There was not adequate familiarity in the Muslim world with the new advances to do so*. Hence the continuing objections of the *Ulema* to Western learning, even after the first lot of European books had been translated. Quickly, Europe and its writers claimed this religious objection was *towards acquiring knowledge, not to European corruption*. So thorough was this

brainwash that even Thomas Jefferson, the American founder, a genuine intellectual and avid reader, was to believe that the Turks, while they were very fine people, were kept from acquiring knowledge by their religion!

Why did not the Muslim world revive that fire for learning and innovations that Muslims had pioneered in past centuries so that dependence upon Western learning would not be so necessary? Why had that fire died out? There was more than one reason. We have examined the reasons in outline before, but *because the issue was, is, and must always be vital, it bears repeating and re-examination*.

## ( 5 )

Muslims had sought, in each generation, to know and follow all that Prophet Muhammad had said and taught, just as Christians had tried to do all that they believed Jesus taught. But there were inherent differences, between Islam and Christianity, from circumstances. Because Prophet Muhammad, said he was the last of God's prophets and these prophets and messengers had been sent to all parts of the world, Muslim scholars spread their visions far and wide to explore and learn what had been said before. Jews as well as Christians were taught that Jews were God's Chosen People, therefore, *He had only sent prophets to His Chosen people*. All the sages from whom the rest of the world had learnt from were pagans and false.

Importantly, Christianity's base, soon after inception, *was far from the land where Jesus had lived*. And it was many decades after him that Christianity began to attract many followers. Knowledge about Jesus' personal life, his habits, was at best vague and meager. There was not even any reliable information about *when* he was born, what he looked like (in fact early reports of his physical appearance had been uncomplimentary, especially that provided by St. Cyril). And only about three years of his entire life was known, and that only after four books had been selected from hundreds of accounts *more than three hundred years later*. Therefore, *no one could ever be certain just how much of his message survived in pristine form and how much has been re-invented*.

So Christians argued for generations about the basics of Jesus' message, even about who he said he was. The distance in time and geography was a handicap. But in another way this distance became an *advantage*, because Christians could not be confused with *Middle Eastern ethnicity and ethnic practices of his time*. Of course the Church incorporated many European pagan ethnic practices and symbols into Christianity to popularize the religion among Europeans. Jesus' main message, however, as conveyed by the chosen Gospels, remained simple and direct though they too contradicted each other in some ways. But the Church believed that their religion was the *only* route to salvation, so it was incumbent upon them to proselytize and convert unbelievers *by any means*. As a result, Christianity had to be made as attractive and appealing for non-believers, *because the end justifies the means*.

Islam, on the other hand, had taken root and flourished in the very land where Prophet Muhammad had lived, before it spread. The Qur'an was meticulously

noted down, piece by piece, as it was revealed. Additionally, Muhammad's companions all claimed later they kept notes of all that he said; and many of the hundreds who met him kept their notes of what he said. After his death these revelations were put together by his companions in the sequence they felt were correct. But anecdotes among those who had met the Prophet kept mushrooming everywhere, about what he did and said on a variety of subjects. Most Arabs of the Hejaz had been pagan, barbaric, primitive in their beliefs prior to Islam. So great care was needed to screen out false tales about the Prophet and many on examination were found to be fabricated, many others clearly out of context. Worse, these anecdotes multiplied generation after generation. Muslim theologians felt there was urgent need to sort out these "traditions" or *hadiths*, by researching the character of the witnesses (the original witness as well as those to whom the stories had been passed on), to have each *hadith* reaffirmed by more than one source, to make each source swear to the truth, etc..

Reliable scholars of respected qualifications were appointed to undertake the task of researching each source, trace it to its origins, then select just those which were corroborated by other reliable sources. It took many years of hard work. The compendiums of four of these scholars in particular (each of whose works ran to several volumes) won credence among most Sunni Muslims. There were some differences between the findings of one imminent scholar and another so in the future Sunni Muslims would adhere more to one school than another.

Shia theologians had also appointed qualified jurists and scholars to research and they, in time, produced their own compendiums of the Prophet's traditions, based upon detailed screening of the character of the sources, double-checking the sources, under oath, just as the Sunnis did. The one difference among the Shias was that while these authenticated and approved *hadiths* were taken very seriously, it was decided that the best qualified Shia theologians of each era must have the responsibility of interpreting the application of these *hadiths* to contemporary conditions. It was *not* up to the lay believer to interpret them or the rules of conduct applicable to his/her time.

Undoubtedly all these highly detailed, authenticated volumes were of immense benefit for the practice of Islam, especially as they ensured that the frivolous and unsubstantiated stories were discarded. And, for the very pious, who wished to live entirely in the lifestyle of the prophet, these sources were marvelous references. But with the production of these enormous compendiums now authenticated and approved by theologians, there was, at least *unintentionally*, a psychological barrier against the free adventure into secular knowledge in any field. Knowledge, and its acquisition, of course, was still highly regarded, as there could be no doubt about the Prophet Muhammad's many directives in this regard. But now, one had to be careful not to over-step what came to be regarded as strict, Islamic rules at each step, to the acquisition of knowledge. Because of the sharp differences between the Islamic schools of thought, they could not pool their resources to determine which of these practices from the Prophet's time were to be considered "for all time".

And then there were what might be called the "strict constructionists". Many of the religious leaders objected to innovations and re-interpretations of Islam in keeping with the time, because this would make at least some of their own expertise obsolete.

Even during the era of the more enlightened Abbasid caliphs (that followed the Umayyad dynasty), when the excursion of Muslim scholars into Greek Thought had been at its zenith, there had been concern voiced by some *Ulema* (theologians) that at least some of the many thesis being produced by these Muslim scholars were exploring *beyond* Islamic philosophy. There had also been criticism about the lifestyle of some pioneering Muslim scholars.

It needs to be repeated that Prophet Muhammad himself had said, many times, during his life, that he was only a man, no more than that. And people understood that. In the normal course, therefore, even after the compendiums of *hadiths* had been published, Muslims would have settled, in time, upon a healthy balance between what must be considered *compulsory* for Muslims for *all* time, versus what might have applied only in the early stages of Islam, in the Prophet's time, and so on. But such healthy balance in the extremely turbulent times was very hard. In these times, right after the Crusades and then the Mongol invasions had commenced, the times were very different. The Muslim populace had been subjected to unending nightmares, unending horror for many generations, mass brutalities, mass killings, rape and pillage of civilians as one wave after another of Christian Crusaders poured in periodically for centuries. And in between these invasions by the Crusaders, there were the *internal* battles for power, there were more barbaric Mongol invasions in the thirteenth century rampaging through the Muslim lands, killing entire populations and burning entire towns, burning libraries and universities many with irreplaceable original manuscripts. There had been home-made killers too, the Timur-style barbarism. After the 15th century, in the highly advanced Muslim society in Spain, Muslims suffered mass extinction, forced conversions, brutalities beyond description.

In times of great suffering, religious-minded human beings are apt to believe that somehow, their own shortcomings in religion have brought such calamities upon them. Believers therefore tend to become stringently *literal* in all of their practice of religion. The surviving Muslims in these circumstances who turned to God as the only Savior, wished to stay rigidly within the *safest* confines of religious teachings. Perhaps God had allowed the enemies to burn those innumerable books and manuscripts of early Muslim scholars and their libraries because He disapproved of such explorations into knowledge outside of Islam. In the milieu that had developed under never-ending tragedies, even the theologians felt it was *too risky* to even attempt to separate the religion from ethnic practices that may have crept in.

When Western chroniclers and later historians write about the Crusades and the times of the Ottoman Empire, they provide highlights of *their versions* of what happened in battles, with the leaders on both sides as star performers. The populace is just a vague background, mere numbers, if that, not individuals with families and personal problems and aspirations.



The Muslim populace lived, day after day, under such conditions, earning a living, feeding their families, nurturing their children, always under the dread of extinction at any time. There were the perennial questions to which they could never find the answer: Why did the Christians hate Muslims so much, when Muslims revered Jesus as a major prophet of God? Why did God permit these unending invasions and brutalities upon the Muslim world? They, the Muslims, must have displeased Him. What else were Muslim doing that He might disapprove? The Sunnis were convinced that the Shias were the cause of God's displeasure, the Shias were convinced that the Sunnis were. The politicians on both sides said so about the other, as did many of the *Ulema*. It was the excesses of the *other* school of thought that caused Christian Europe to hate Muslims, not *us*. God was displeased because of that *other* school of thought.

Muslims turned to God, through the *Ulema*, in their traumas. They prayed, fasted, gave alms but now, as many of the *Ulema* suggested, they rigidly followed every tradition from the Books of Hadiths (traditions) of the Prophet's time as possible, in dress, in daily life. Religion was the only *security blanket* available to them in a world gone mad.

( 6 )

France was furious at the recent increase in the use of English and other European influence in Istanbul and sought to restore its own former "special relations" with Turkey. Louis XIV sent the Marquis de Villeneuve as envoy to pressure the Sultan, to stress the unreliability of England and the perpetual hostility of Russia. But the Ottomans, yearned for peace with all Europe, even Austria: "The present phase of its defensive policy favored the Austrian imperial resident at the expense of the French ambassador. The Turks...sought to avoid further conflict through appeasement of the [Austrian] emperor with sundry concessions."<sup>11</sup>

In 1730, a Francophile Grand Vizier Topal Osman was appointed after Sultan Ahmed III was deposed. He agreed to more trade concessions for France, to have several Catholic churches restored, and gave more freedom to French (Catholic) missionaries to "serve the needs of the Christian minorities in the empire."<sup>12</sup> Soon there were protests from Muslims who accused these missionaries of trying to convert Muslims. The Qur'an said *La Iqrahafid-deen* (there is no compulsion in religion) but the Christian Church felt *Christians were obligated to spread Christianity at the direction of Jesus*.

Three years later, Austria and Russia (where Peter had died and been succeeded recently by Tsarina Anna) were each pressuring Turkey to become their ally, to be "involved as allies in a war for the spoils of the Polish Succession backing one candidate, while France backed another."<sup>13</sup> France was the more insistent and finally the Grand Vizier said Turkey was willing to side with France but "for nothing less than a formal offensive and defensive alliance, affirmed with guarantees between the Sultan and the king of France." Immediately there was indignation from Cardinal Fleury "the power behind Louis XV" who said this would carry a "risk of conflict with the Christian powers of Europe"<sup>14</sup> and insisted that France

reject this offer. As there was already a tacit agreement between the France and Turkey since the days of Francis I, this reluctance to put into writing what had already existed for many decades finally forced Turkey to realize that Turkey could not even rely on France, its old "ally". As a result, relations between the two countries cooled.

In 1734, the Russians decided to test Turkey's determination to avoid war. "The Russians, banking on the Porte's [Turkish government's] neutrality" moved first against the Ukraine and then to the Black Sea "without a declaration of war upon Azov, which it captured. At the same time the main Russian army invaded the Crimea... [and] proceeded to lay waste, with devastation and massacre, much of the Crimean peninsula."<sup>15</sup>

"Now too the Emperor Charles VI [of the Holy Roman Empire] sought a share in the spoils, and with a view to joined armed intervention, a secret treaty was agreed between Austria and Russia. But the Turks remained obstinately reluctant to confront their enemies in battle. They preferred to bid for mediation by one of the Christian powers, whose respective envoys, the imperial resident and the English and Dutch representatives, competed for the role of mediator... A congress was held in the summer of 1737 at Nemirov, in the Polish Ukraine... Austria and Russia barely concealed their real designs on the Ottoman Empire... their joint proposals were in effect an ultimatum, as to an enemy already defeated. Now the Turks had no choice but to reject the terms."<sup>16</sup>

While the Church, Protestant and Catholic, was eager to see the eventual demise of the Ottoman Empire, each of the colonial powers were even more eager to ensure that this *happened at the right time*, i.e., when their own share of the Ottoman pie would be the largest. Therefore each was keen to ensure that the Ottomans withstood conquests by competitive powers (at this point Russia and Austria), but *without unnecessarily provoking these powers against themselves*. This was, from now on, to become the standard policy of France and England.

"Russia's threatened presence in the Mediterranean through the Black Sea at last awakened Versailles [France] to the need for a complete reappraisal of [its] policy... The Ottoman Empire, however inert and decrepit, must be preserved. Hence... a new and positive diplomatic offensive designed... to stiffen the Turks and convince them that it was better to fight than to yield to dishonorable conditions of peace. When the Grand Vizier realized that he had been thoroughly deceived by both Austria and Russia, he at once proved responsive to the overtures of the French."<sup>17</sup> Reluctantly Turkey went to war.

Without waiting to consult her ally Russia, Austria now offered a separate peace treaty with the Ottomans; and France's Ambassador Villeneuve was sent with a letter from King Louis XV to his "dear and perfect friend the Ottoman Emperor"<sup>18</sup> to act as mediator with the Austrian General von Neipperg, along with the Grand Vizier. By the terms of the peace agreement ("formally guaranteed by France"), the Ottoman Empire regained all it had lost in Serbia, Bosnia, and Walachia through the previous Treaty of Passarowitz. The terms of the peace signed with Russia were less advantageous to the Turks. "All Russian conquests in the Crimea,

Moldavia and Bessarabia were restored to the Turks but the Russians were granted more territory in the region of the Ukraine.<sup>19</sup>

With the signing of this Treaty of Belgrade, Turkey "was now able to enjoy a respite from conflict with its new and most formidable enemy, Russia, for a generation to come," says Kinross. For this, it proceeded to reward France. In 1740, a formal treaty of friendship and commerce was signed with France, after Turkey agreed, in its twenty-four articles, to extra Capitulation and other favorable commercial terms to France. Sweden had now signed an alliance treaty with Turkey, presumably in token appreciation for all the destruction that Turkey had suffered from Russia's wrath by refusing to hand over Sweden's King Charles to Tsar Peter and instead gave him sanctuary for five years. But Sweden was never to offer assistance or come to Turkey's defense in its future horrors; as the eighteenth century came to a close, it was to France that Turkey, "now looked for inspiration and support, in the evolving world of Western power and civilization."<sup>20</sup>

### (7)

The principle reason why Turkey was to enjoy peace for a generation was that the European powers were busy in wars against each other, and suspended, for the time being, their designs upon the Ottoman Empire. Following the death of Austria's Emperor Charles VI, European powers were hungering for the "spoils to be grabbed through the dismemberment of those Austrian dominions inherited, under the Pragmatic Sanction, by his daughter Maria Theresa. This led first to the war of the Austrian Succession, then to the Seven Years War and the rise to power of the Prussian King Frederick the Great" reports Kinross.<sup>21</sup> He does not add that England had not only with its war with France but the American War of Independence.

In 1783, with the help of France, the Americans, mostly Europe's proletariat, descendants of those who had been called "multitudes such as lie at home pestering the land with pestilence and penury and infecting one another with vice and villainy" in the British Parliament, later "raw, undisciplined, cowardly men" (by Lord Sandwich) and "a race of convicts" (by Dr. Samuel Johnson) had won freedom by the Treaty of Paris in 1783. It was a major loss for England. But the anguish was more than compensated with the windfall its East India Company was to provide shortly. It had established itself in the East, a far more insidious entity than a "trading company" it had promised the Mogul Emperor of India it was.

Arab traders had visited India's west coast over many centuries; that was how Arab seamen had naively helped the Portuguese "discover" the sea route to India in 1498. In 712 AD, an Arab, Mohammed ibn Kasim, had conquered Sind in northwestern India, the first conquest by a Muslim. Muslim invasions were at times to be quite fierce, but this one was relatively benign. He "left their [local] shrines undecorated. 'The temples' he proclaimed 'shall be inviolate, like the churches of the Christians, synagogues of the Jews, and the altars of the Magians'"<sup>22</sup> writes Stanley-Poole in *Medieval India under Mohammedan Rule 712-1764* (10th edition, Fisher Unwin, London 1916). This Arab invasion was to be the only Arab

one, and a localized one at that. "When we speak of the Mohammedan empire in India we mean the rule of the Turks. *Their invasion was no part of the expansion of Islam as a religious movement.* It was merely the overflow of the teeming cradle-land of Central Asia, the eastern counterpart of those vast migrations of Huns, Turks, Mongols, which from time to time swept over Europe."<sup>23</sup> Aryans had periodically invaded and conquered Dravidian India for centuries before recorded history; most recently there had been the Huns, Scythians, Yavanas and Alexander's Macedonians.

The English adventurers arrived shortly after the Portuguese. Ironically, it was the Portuguese who made a present of the first Indian territory to the English crown. Having conquered most of the western coast of India, the Portuguese gave the island of Bombay as part of the dowry to King Charles II on his marriage to the Infanta of Portugal, Catherine of Braganza. By then, the Mogul Emperors ruled much of India from their capital in Agra.

Early European journals reveal that at the start, the English adventurers who came to India were treated contemptuously and those who reached as high as the Mogul Emperor were looked upon with amusement by him. At first the fledgling East India Company had been "cringing to insult, asserting no trace of dignity; had even 'suffered blows of the porters, base Peons... much scorn... Englishmen were flouted... even whipped in the streets' reports Stanley Lane-Poole. It is impossible to tell from Western records just what these English "privateers" did to deserve this treatment from gentle Indians, as the only reports provided are by William Hawkins and later Thomas Roe, both in the early 17th century. Clearly both were keen to impress the authorities in England with exaggerated versions of their own importance at the court of Mogul Emperor Jehangir. Jehangir was the son of Emperor Akbar, who had developed an esoteric religion combining what he considered best in Islam, Hinduism, Christianity and Buddhism. Jehangir, the son, however, had reportedly reverted to Islam. He prayed the Muslim prayer, but if Hawkins is to be believed, he also "took opium." William Hawkins was a ruffianly, semi-literate seaman (an expert pirate, as we have seen, who even trained Francis Drake in piracy) yet the august Emperor Jehangir, son of Akbar and a Rajput princess, made the ruffianly Hawkins his constant drinking companion (if we believe Hawkins' own erratic account, in *Narrative of Occurrences* etc, in *The Hawkins Voyages* ed. Sir Clements Markham, Hakluyt Society 1878). Jehangir, it says "granted him everything that the Englishman asked 'swearing by his Father's soul, that if I would remeyne with him, he would grant me articles for our Factories.'"<sup>24</sup>

Hawkins adds many flattering comments about *himself* and England. He says Jehangir's response to the letter he carried from the King of England was "by God, that all what the King had there written he would grant and allow with all his heart, and more."<sup>25</sup> The court language was Persian, though Hindustani (Urdu?) was reportedly spoken, as was Turkish. And it was in Turkish that Hawkins claims he had his long sessions with Jehangir. In this supposed camaraderie with Emperor Jehangir, Hawkins says he had great competition from the Portuguese,



even "an old Portuguese Jesuit"<sup>26</sup> writes Poole. Jehangir "followed his father in his policy [of tolerance] towards the Hindus, and was equally tolerant towards Christians... welcomed Jesuit Father Corsi to his court, encouraged artists to adorn the imperial palaces with pictures and statues of Christian saints, and *had two of his nephews baptized*."<sup>27</sup> Poole, of course, takes Hawkins' account as gospel truth.

The Portuguese had set themselves up by this time "from the Cape of Good Hope [in South Africa] to China with a chain of fortresses and no ship could sail without a Portuguese passport." But the era of Pacheco, Almeida and Albuquerque was over, "the age for Portuguese India passed away... The forts remained, but no attempt at any more ambitious settlement was made... The annexation by Spain [of Portugal] in 1580 was the deathblow to Portugal enterprise in the Indies."<sup>28</sup> "Hawkins... was a *simple honest* sailor, a little inclined to bluster... he was not an educated or penetrating observer"<sup>29</sup> says Poole (italics added). But the "simple honest sailor" provided details of the enormous wealth, the jewelry in Jehangir's court. And quickly England sent Thomas Roe "as ambassador of the king of England in January 1615."<sup>30</sup> He was a prototype of the Empire-builder whom England was from now on to send: better educated, with "passionate devotion to king and country, the great-hearted fanaticism of his age."<sup>31</sup> In his reports, Roe too claimed great things for himself, saying that he chastised the governor of Surat "for searching the persons of British subjects" and even put the Mogul prime-minister in his place, "that I was an Ambassador from a mighty and free Prince, and in that quality his *better*" (italics added). Clearly he gambled heavily on the fact that Indians could not know how primitive England was at this stage.

If the reports of the short tempers of the mighty Moguls are also true, it is hard to see how Roe could have come out alive if he spoke the way he claims. In fact Roe himself later reports that when he tried to get "Capitulation", the magic formula which the English had found to work so well in enriching the English coffers in the Middle and Near East, he reports he failed. "Neyther will this overgrown Eliphant descend to Article or bynde himself reciprocally to any Prince upon terms of Equality, but *only by way of favour admitt our stay*."<sup>32</sup> (italics added). In fact Roe's ego was damaged because "this overgrown Eliphant" did not seem to be greatly impressed. "Indeed Jehangir seemed to be unable to distinguish between an ambassador and a buccaneer, and entertained his excellency with familiar joviality which severely tried the patience of the grave diplomat" Poole moans.<sup>33</sup> Yet Sir Thomas Roe also writes that Jehangir told Roe "I am a king, you shall be welcome: Christian, Moores, Jews, he medled not with their faith; they all came in love, and he would protect them from harm." Roe felt he would have to wait before he could ask for Capitulation again, as England had so successfully obtained from Ottoman sultans and Persian shahs. Roe's class-conscious soul shuddered at times at Jehangir's democratic behavior: "On another occasion, the ambassador [Roe] found him [Jehangir] sharing the coarse meal of a filthy beggar... taking him up in his arms, which no cleanly body durst, imbracing him."<sup>34</sup> Note that this "shudder" is that of Roe of 17th century England, where bathing was still unknown!

It is most likely that the reason why the naive Jehangir could not tell the difference between Ambassador and seaman, as Roe complains, may have been because both seemed to him to have come to seeking favors, and were therefore both "buccaneers." If so, he was more astute than many subsequent Mogul Emperors and many Ottoman Sultans. English "diplomacy" at this stage had not been fully developed into the art form of later years. With practice, English diplomats learnt to gamble on the belief that if one presented oneself with a superior mannerism, even a sneering attitude, the other party was apt to be impressed, be put on the defensive, and *never likely to suspect duplicity from a person with such superior airs*.

To do that successfully required skills that Roe had not as yet mastered. *That is probably why Jehangir was amused!* England was a poor country, much poorer than most countries that its "buccaneers" visited. What wealth it had was concentrated in the hands of a few. England's poor were then, and for generations to come, *among the poorest in the world*. Even villagers in remote Eastern lands, who eked out a living by hard labor, had more basic needs met than did most of the English masses. But the English aristocracy and its bankers had a distinct advantage in this policy of *studied* superiority they developed over time. At home, it kept the masses at bay. And, as we have noted, there was a positive, flip side to it all. The claim to superiority of blood could only prevail if the *mannerism* suited it. Good cultural education was necessary for the aristocrats to claim this superiority, which came gradually with the means to acquire it; good speech, manners, and at least the claim to a superior code of conduct. In succeeding generations, there were to be, as a result of class distinction, as in all parts of the world, *at least some among the superior class* who felt it their *duty*, as the privileged class, to genuinely consider it their responsibility to *have* superior values, what the French were to call *noblesse oblige*, in its best form, a search for excellence.

These values of *noblesse oblige* had already become a tradition among the ruling elite in the Muslim lands. They had existed in India before the Muslims as well, and in many other Asian lands. And they were often observed *sincerely and proudly*. Of course noble gestures could be exploited by those not so noble in character. As we have seen, noble gestures had led to grave consequences for Muslim leaders during the earlier Crusades, and *such gestures were to continue to be exploited fully by the new Crusaders, the colonialists, as they had been by past Crusaders*. The difference could well have been that while the Muslim elite felt obligated to *prove* their generosity and noble principles, the colonialists could suddenly drop those noble principles and grab what they could. *Importantly, Muslims were always required by their religion to respect 'the people of the Book', whereas Christians were instructed by their Church to look upon Islam as the enemy, to be used*.

Just as the Ottoman sultans had, the simple-minded Jehangir saw these early approaches for commerce by the English visitors as intriguing, perhaps even amusing, and was loath to disappoint them, "in spite of the strenuous opposition of the Jesuits"<sup>35</sup> who sought to maintain the monopoly established by the earlier Portuguese colonialists "there was nothing to suggest the most distant dream that in two centuries and a half... would culminate in the sovereignty of a British Queen

over the whole empire."<sup>36</sup> The English did not achieve that miracle entirely on their own. They were helped along by the extremists among the Moguls, the Marathas, the various Afghan and Turkish tribal leaders, the Rajputs, the Jats, the Golkondas, some ruthless, some ambitious, some corrupt, some innocent victims. There is ample evidence (even diplomatic documents) to prove that the British encouraged hostilities between Hindus and Muslims. Four years after Panipat, in 1764, the Mogul emperor was reduced to being a pensioner of the East India Company, which was now very wealthy with India's wealth.

Therefore, when the British lost America in 1783 to what became the United States, it was painful but not devastating. By now not only did Britain have most of Canada, but it would soon conquer a new continent Down Under from unsuspecting inhabitants. Australasia became what America had been for the British, the new penal colony where British convicts could be dispatched.

Losing America, however, became very painful to Britain when great wealth was discovered there in gold, oil, and other precious commodities as America spread from "sea to shining sea". But it was *not* entirely lost. Newly rich Americans yearning for status, and with it, a thirst to be acceptable to their British upper class, intensified with each passing generation. The British upper classes were loath initially to deal with the American proletariat but then realized how profitable it could be in many ways to exploit this "cousinly link". Gradually, Britain even accepted the offspring of an American hurriedly married into an impecunious branch of the British aristocracy as its beloved Prime Minister. A substantial share of the wealth which nature had provided the American continent gradually came to Britain, through aid, industry, trade, real estate and *inheritance*.

## ( 8 )

France, using its good relations with Turkey, continued to try to draw the Ottoman Sultan into European wars. "Having designs upon Austria in concert with Prussia and the German princes, the French put pressure on the Turks to invade Hungary, promising them its kingdom as a reward... but Sultan Mahmud I, the successor of Ahmed, was not to be drawn. He firmly insisted on Turkey's neutrality, publishing a manifesto in which he sought to dissuade the other powers from war, and presumed to offer them his own mediation." This offer, from "an infidel between Christians" drew "little more than a smile." The French then tried again to draw Turkey into European wars, using "the renegade Bonneval" to influence "the Porte in favor of war. But the Sultan and his ministers remained adamant. A persistent renewal of French efforts during the next decade to draw the Porte into an alliance with Prussia and Sweden met only with a persistent refusal. The Porte was indeed so determined on insurance against war at any cost as to contract, in response to the overtures of Maria Theresa... a treaty of 'perpetual' peace with Austria and Russia."<sup>37</sup>

This "perpetual peace" with Russia and Austria was actually seen by Sultan Mahmud as a binding promise on all sides and therefore "throughout the ruling establishment a complacent improvidence reigned." There were some who felt

that this period should be used to upgrade the armed forces in case of urgent need, but the Janissaries were as strongly opposed as ever to "modernizing" of the military as that would make their own expertise obsolete.

Sultan Mahmud I died in 1754; he was succeeded by Osman III, a hunchback. The rule in effect passed on to the new Grand Vizier Raghib Pasha, generally considered an honest and intelligent man, but greatly influenced by European culture. He sought to westernize Turkey but in response to criticism from the religious elements, promised he would not endanger "the harmony of the existing institutions."<sup>38</sup> Raghib Pasha was convinced that Prussia, unlike the other European powers, could be a genuine friend of the Ottomans. He signed in 1761 a treaty with Prussia that he saw as an "offensive and defensive alliance." He argued that "Prussia was a power with no territorial designs on the Ottoman empire." Clearly more perceptive than his predecessors, he was, "fully alive to the Russian menace" despite the peace treaty, and proceeded, within the constraints of a tight budget to make improvements in the armed forces, in public works and revived the canal project to link the Black Sea with the Mediterranean. The Grand Vizier also saw that services for pilgrims needed attention. Hitherto conditions for Hajj pilgrims had been neglected. Even food was usually in short supply. He sought to reduce the unhygienic conditions they faced, which led to many deaths; he provided Mecca and Medina with more grain supplies. And he attempted to soothe the new, hot-tempered Sultan Mustafa III, who saw the chicanery and duplicity of European powers in the past as deserving of some retaliation if it recurred.

And, recur it did. The unscrupulous Catherine was now Tsarina, after her "debauched" husband Peter III was overthrown by a military coup. History books were to call her Catherine "the Great" (like Peter "the Great"). She yearned to conquer Turkey, believed treaties with Turkey were meant to be broken. "It was Catherine's implacable ambition to rule as Tsarina on the shores of the Bosphorus, through the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire."

## ( 9 )

With the death of Augustus III of Poland, Catherine felt Poland should first be dismembered and swallowed. She formed an alliance with Frederick "the Great" of Prussia, hitherto her enemy, to partition Poland between them. One of Catherine's innumerable lovers was placed upon the throne of Austria, so Austria was brought into the deal, as well.

Soon Grand Vizier Raghib Pasha died, and there was no longer his restraining influence upon the hotheaded Sultan Mustafa III. The latter was furious at the open desires expressed by Catherine upon Turkey, the duplicity being carried on by her in association with Prussia and Austria, who promptly ignored their treaties with the Ottomans. The Poles turned once again to Turkey for help against Catherine. "But his [Sultan's] Divan [advisory council] was still opposed to war... The Porte did no more than protest passively, content, despite pleas from the suffering Poles, to be deluded by reassurances from Russian and Prussian envoys."<sup>39</sup>



In the meanwhile, "insidious internal dissensions were fermented by Russian agents in various parts of the [Ottoman] empire — in Montenegro, Albania, Moldavia, and Walachia; in Georgia; in the region of the Crimea."<sup>40</sup> Russian agents pressured Christians everywhere in the Ottoman Empire that they should become loyal to Catherine who was going to crush the Muslim state very soon.

Along with these provocations, the Russians attempted to sabotage lines of communications within the Turkish Empire. When the Russian massacre of the Poles began, and Poles fled for safety into the Ottoman Empire, Russian forces followed them, killed them and burned down the Turkish vassal territory of Balta, near the frontier of Bessarabia.<sup>41</sup>

A furious Mustafa III dismissed his Grand Vizier, and sent an ultimatum to Catherine to withdraw her forces from Poland so the fleeing Poles could return to Poland. When she refused, Turkey declared war. France encouraged the move it had wanted for a long time, convinced that Turkey's military strength would crush Russia. When France sent Baron de Tott to take "an inventory of [Turkey's] arms and ammunitions, he was appalled at the deficiencies of the arsenal at Istanbul."<sup>42</sup>

Turkey was in no position to launch a war, and by hastily doing so, had given Catherine time to prepare for her own offensives. To top it all, the new Grand Vizier picked by the Sultan was Mehmed Emin, a man of letters with no military experience. After the first Turkish defeat, the unfortunate Grand Vizier was tried and executed. That same year, 1769, Catherine commenced her lifelong goal, the invasion of Greece, knowing that if it succeeded it could provide the perfect excuse to invade and capture the Ottoman Empire, and therefore, she would become the heroine of the Christian world, especially of the Church. Even politically, "England at this time favored the expansion of Russia as opposed to that of her enemy France; nor did she yet support the policy of upholding the integrity of the Ottoman Empire" admits Kinross. In fact now England warned that "any attempt by France or Spain to obstruct the entrance of the Russian fleet into the Mediterranean would be treated as a hostile act."<sup>43</sup> The man whom Catherine now placed in charge of her fleet was Admiral Elphinstone, a British admiral!

While Count Orloff (the brother of another of Catherine's lovers, who was promised the Greek throne as reward) led the initial force towards Greece in 1770, groundwork had already been conducted in Greece to create a massive uprising by the Christian population.<sup>44</sup> As we have seen, Greek Christian population had looked upon the Turkish conquerors in the past as *saviors*, but now, especially with passions aroused among the Christian peasantry by Russian agents and by their tribal leaders, in the name of Christianity, doubts were being sown against Turkey. Many of the Greek "tribal leaders" selected by Russia were in fact brigands themselves, keen on murder and looting. And so "The Russians failed to establish systematic control over these wild mountain brigands bent only on the indiscriminate slaughter of Turks."<sup>44</sup>

Muhsinzade Pasha, the governor of the Morea, was able to assemble Albanian reinforcements and defeat the Russian invaders and their wild Greek allies. But the Russians were not through. They moved now to a naval attack. Two ships — "one piloted by an English lieutenant" blockade an Ottoman fleet in the inlet of Chesme.

"The harbour...soon became a [fiery] volcano, which engulfed the whole naval force of the Turks" The English admiral (Elphinstone) now "urged that the [Russian] fleet should sail at once for the Dardanelles, whose defenses were poor, thence force its way into the Sea of Marmara to bombard and reduce Istanbul."<sup>45</sup> But Orloff hesitated, which gave the Turks time to erect heavy batteries to defend Istanbul on both the European and Asian sides. When Russia's English mercenaries attacked, Admiral Hassan of Algiers with just four thousand volunteers surprised them with a fiery counter-offensive, and drove them back to their ships. Orloff remained in the Mediterranean for a while, however. He "harassed Turkish shipping, impeded communications between the capital [Istanbul] and its Asiatic possessions, and in the now familiar Russian fashion intervened in the internal affairs of Egypt and Syria... instigating insurrections against the Porte."<sup>46</sup>

Meanwhile, the Russians were much more successful in their other offensives against the Ottoman forces. The Russians captured Moldavia and Walachia in 1770, then all Turkish territory north of the Danube. The Tartars offered stiff resistance, but there was ambiguous communication between the Turkish and Tartar forces that only aided the Russians who soon captured most of the territory. The Tartar Khan fled, the Turkish governor was captured and imprisoned. Most of the northern coast of the Black Sea was lost to the Ottoman Empire. And the Russians by this time had also conquered Mingrelia and Georgia in the Caucasus.

In 1771, Russia agreed to an armistice on condition that the Crimea should be ceded to the Russians. This was furiously opposed by the religion element in Turkey, who felt that the Crimea with its large Muslim population could never be given away to Catherine. Mustafa was therefore forced to reject the Russian demand and so the Russians recommenced their attacks with even greater ferocity in 1773 on the south bank of the Danube "massacring the civilian inhabitants of the undefended town of Bazarjik" says Kinross, before a Turkish force could arrive and drive them away. The Turks met with some successes in repulsing the invading forces, but in 1774 the Russians had moved south of the Balkans, and now the Turks were forced to sue for peace. The old Russian terms of two years ago were demanded by Russia, through the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji. There was one important difference. Catherine had now realized the huge expense to Russia of the war, and agreed to the political independence of the Tartars in the Crimea with Turkey given religious arbitration over the Muslim Tartars "the first international acknowledgement of the Sultan's rights over Moslems beyond his frontiers."<sup>47</sup> However the treaty did cede a lot of the territories on the Crimean border to Russia including Azov and Kinburn and gave her access to the Black Sea, which could no longer be the "pure and immaculate virgin" that the Turks had insisted it should remain but over which Russia could now have navigation rights. The Russian fleet had to withdraw from the Mediterranean, Georgia and Mingrelia were restored to the Turks, as were the Rumanian provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia. But now Russia had "rights of intervention" on behalf of Orthodox Christians in Turkey. This was to lead to future conflicts, as Russia would later seek similar rights over all Christians in the Turkey, to which France and England would go to war.

The systematic dismemberment of the Ottoman State was underway. The religious issue, first raised through the propaganda of Christian agents within Turkey, and then through this "religious autonomy"<sup>44</sup> with supervision by these Christian Europe was to sow the seeds of internal dissensions much more powerful than in the past. Now Russia *had* to be accorded a respectable status within the Turkish court with a permanent Russian minister.

## ( 10 )

In 1773, the fiery but very ill Sultan Mustafa III had wanted to go to the Danube war front himself, "but his ministers restrained him; the *Ulema* opposed his departure." He was close to death, and did die a few weeks later. His brother, released after forty-three years in the Cage (the confinement to which an heir-apparent were now often kept), succeeded him. His reign was uneventful, except that the treasury was almost entirely empty after the war. And there were signs that Catherine was preparing to launch more attacks. In 1778, when her second grandson was born, she directed that he be called Constantine and *that he be nursed by a wet nurse who was Greek; and*—according to an English tutor at the Russian court at the time — *the child was taught to speak in Greek from the start.*<sup>45</sup> By the time the boy became an adolescent, insurrections were commencing again within the Ottoman territories, among the Christian populace, the same Christian population who had earlier expressed preference for Ottoman rule, but now saw Russian power was on the ascendancy.

Catherine by now had commenced to ignore the Treaty of Kainaarji, and invaded the Crimea again, overthrowing their elected Tatar chieftain, and replacing him one who was a Russian stooge. The Turks humbly accepted the reality and Catherine's choice of the new Tatar chief. But the decadent new Tatar chief appointed by Russia was soon living in such a profligate style that there were revolts by the Tatar populace, and he escaped to Russia. A Russian army was sent to quell the rebellion and then proceeded to capture the Crimea in 1783. Once they had annexed Crimea, Catherine and Prince Plemkin had no further use for the Tatar chief they had appointed as their man; they ordered him "to be imprisoned in barbaric conditions, then pushed across the frontier into Turkey, where he was forthwith decapitated."<sup>50</sup>

Catherine assured the Christian West that "Russia had performed in the Crimea a great act of liberation... when the more noble of the Tartars preferred to fight to the death for their country's independence, General Paul Potemkin, the prince's cousin, put them to the sword in a massacre which was said to have accounted for thirty thousand Tartars, while tens of thousands more fled into exile, together with a large population of Armenian Christians, dying from cold and starvation as they swam across the steppes to the east of the Sea of Azov. For all this, the general was rewarded with the dignity of Chief Admiral of the Black Sea and governor of the new Russian province of Tauris."<sup>51</sup> Tauris was the new name given by Russia to the Crimea and surrounding territories.

Next, Catherine made overtures to Austria and arranged, with Emperor Joseph (Marie Antoinette's brother) at Kherson, on the Dnieper, a grand function called "On the Road to Byzantium" with the declared objective of the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. Along with this display were the continuing revolts instigated within Turkey, known now to be instigated by these foreign powers. Increasingly, Turkish Christians now believed Turkey would lose, and sought to win favor with Catherine the Great.

A more sophisticated Turkish government would have recognized that these provocations were a bait to tempt Turkey into a war while it was still weak. But Turkey, blinded by rage, fell for it. So these Russian provocations had now "served the deliberate purpose of provoking the Turks to declare war and so brand themselves as aggressors."<sup>52</sup> European leaders gave silent approval to the Russo-Austrian tactics.

By now there was a growing bloc of literates in Europe and more and more newspapers; governments recognized they could create attitudes and beliefs among newspaper readers. Even the "intelligentsia" of Western Europe, "educated" in world affairs through this media, was easy to win over: Turkey, the Muslim State, had now declared war and "branded themselves the aggressors in the eyes of the intelligentsia of Western Europe, where Russia now enjoyed fame and prestige. French men of letters in particular saw Catherine as an enlightened despot, promising much for civilization. To Voltaire her war against Mustafa III had been a war between *reason and fanaticism, civilization and backwardness.*"<sup>53</sup> Many newspapers had voiced this opinion very clearly for public consumption, and it would become the battle-cry of Christian Europe for generations to come.

When the Porte declared war in 1787, Emperor Joseph quickly sided with Russia and declared war on the Turks. The Turks suffered defeats from the very start on both fronts. Even the renowned but aging Admiral Hassan, recalled from Egypt to lead the naval forces was crushed by the now superior Russian naval power. "By the end of 1788 the Turks had virtually lost the war on the eastern front."<sup>54</sup> On the Austrian front, the Turks fared slightly better, aided mainly by Joseph's own incompetence at the front. In 1789, Joseph gave up the leadership of the Austrian forces to a Scottish mercenary, a veteran of the Seven Years War, Marshall Loudan, whose forces attacked and captured Bosnia and Serbia.

In 1789, Sultan Abdul Hamid died, and was succeeded by his nephew Selim III. The Turks continued to suffer defeats at the hands of the Russians and the Austrians. But in 1790, Emperor Joseph of Austria died and his brother Leopold, now Emperor, did not share Joseph's deep hate for the Turks. He was willing to sign a peace treaty with them, restoring conquests. "*The dismemberment of Turkey was in Leopold's eyes not a policy which would benefit his own empire*", says Kinross.<sup>55</sup>

Catherine was furious with Leopold's policy of peace; her own troops continued to invade Turkey, attacking the fortress of Ismail near the Danube. They met with resistance, but "finally, at noonday, the Turks and Tartars of the garrison rallied in the marketplace, where all perished in a two-hour fight to the



death. Fresh Russian troops then poured into the ruined city for three days of pillage and indiscriminate massacre." The Russian general Suvarov "drafted a triumphant dispatch, *partly in doggerel verse*, to his Empress."

"There was a significant new shift in the alignment of the powers of Europe." While England and France had profited greatly through trade with Turkey over the centuries, and had periodically won over the Turkish rulers with "diplomatic" friendship, whenever it really mattered politically "throughout the eighteenth century the foreign policy of England... had favored Russia... Charles Fox, as foreign minister, voiced the Whig policy that alliance with the northern [Christian] powers 'ever has been and ever will be the system of every enlightened Englishman' — and those powers included Russia, with whom moreover England traded with profit. But now, with France in the throes of revolution, the pattern of power in Europe was changing and *the danger of Russian power became more evident*. England's pro-Russian policy was thus reversed by the younger Pitt [Prime Minister], with the formation in 1790 of a triple alliance between England, Prussia, and Holland for the preservation of the Ottoman empire"<sup>56</sup> but their leaders were afraid to declare themselves *individually* for the "preservation" of the Muslims empire, and face harsh criticism from the Church. But they could not allow Russia to have all of the Ottoman Empire to herself. Their "Triple Alliance" helped them to face the *ire of Christendom through strength in numbers*.

When the adamant Catherine refused peace overtures from the Triple Alliance, and voiced her determination to destroy Turkey, Prussia sent an army into Livonia to defend the Turks. Not to be outdone, England also sent a small fleet into the Baltic and a smaller one into the Black Sea, but it took a lot of arguments in Parliament for Pitt to achieve this "In the course of the debates the opposition, reviling the Turks as barbarians, praised the Empress by comparison as the most magnificent of sovereigns. One speaker went so far as to declare that her conquest of Constantinople and the expulsion of the Turks from Europe could only be a benefit to mankind."<sup>57</sup> Pitt only won by a narrow margin by arguing the pragmatic benefits to England, the need to control Russia, that "if her aggressiveness were left unchecked it would lead to the predominance of Russian naval power, not only in the Black Sea but through the Bosphorus and into the Mediterranean."<sup>58</sup>

Catherine, noting now that her furious comments against mediation by the Alliance had led to their active involvement in defense of Turkey, suddenly relented, and in 1791, at Jassy, she agreed to a treaty, relinquishing all conquests west of Danube, but she did retain other conquered territories. And she retained her newly acquired control of the Black Sea and of sea lanes right to Istanbul so she might invade later with a much larger fleet than the Turks. She had her secret plans all set for an invasion of Turkey when she died in 1796.

Even those who called her Catherine "The Great," conceded that this very fat and ungainly woman *enjoyed* using force and inflicting pain, not only to conquer other lands but, just as fiercely, used force to order thousands of lovers, including most of her palace guards, to her bed, setting a record, it is said, in the number of lovers that she, the "Soldier of Christ", consumed.

(11)

Selim III who became sultan in 1789, the year of the French Revolution, "had been conducting secret correspondence with King Louis XVI before the revolution, and he greatly admired French culture." But now, noting the causes of that revolution, Salem nervously sought to restart the reforms of the Tulip Age of fifty years ago.

The French had revolted not only against the aristocracy but against the Church too. And France was bankrupt mainly *because it had spent too much helping the American revolutionaries win their independence. Yet most Americans were not even grateful*. In fact under Alexander Hamilton with his Federalists' influence, the US government had quickly rejected Jefferson's pleas and become ardent allies of England. France was further weakened by its new *moral* movement for secular restraints upon religious extremism; that infuriated not only the Churches around Europe, but politicians who had used religious extremism to their advantage.

The population of the Ottoman Empire had been reduced by hundreds of thousands from foreign invasions but so far, the Ottomans had lost only Hungary and Transylvania, the Crimea and Azov. But there were constant revolts now within the nation. It was not just Christian revolting to align themselves with Christian powers. Muslim nationalists and ethnics around the Empire were exasperated that more and more favoritism was being shown to *Christians* (as demanded by Christian Europe) and so the crumbling economy was victimizing *them, the Muslims, especially the non-Turks*, while the nation was being squeezed of its revenues by Christian Europe. The Wahabites in the deserts of Arabia, the Druze in the hills of Syria, the Palestinians, and most of all the powerful Mamluk Beys of Egypt along with other local princes and aristocracies in the far corners of the Empire were ready to revolt and carve out their own portions.

The reforms that Selim now introduced became known as the *Nizam-e-Jedid* or "The New Order."<sup>59</sup> Louis XIV had written to Selim about the reforms he was trying to implement in response to the revolt there, and Selim was impressed. He formed councils and committees to study, report and discuss military, social and economic issues, its members to include twenty-two dignitaries, civil, military and religious and included Christians. By 1792 he had reports on military reforms on European lines, especially on the French style which Selim admired the most. Selim had already asked the French to send instructors and technicians for the re-training of his military.

Improved military arsenals, equipment and foundries were set up with French experts, and French books were imported in large numbers. This of course also required a crash program for the learning of the French language. Hitherto, the Turks, like most Muslims, had kept away from learning European languages. But now not only was a French printing press set up in Istanbul, but the *Imprimerie Nationale de Paris* was allowed to send a large flock of French printers and tutors to operate and educate.

After the French revolution, the Christian population of the Ottoman state was not at all keen on the increasing French influence. For one thing many Christians in Turkey held important positions due to their own knowledge of European languages, and the new trend towards allowing Muslim Turks to learn foreign languages would reduce their own importance. Also, the secular French revolution was not to their liking as this non-religious movement would reduce their own importance among "fellow-Christians" in France and its European allies. Later of course they changed their minds when France's secular zeal ended; then the French-Turks once again sought Europe's help to get statehood for the Christians in the Ottoman empires.<sup>60</sup>

Selim III and his advisors were apparently convinced that while France had been Catholic through the centuries, the Revolution was secular, and therefore the historic Catholic Church obsession with conversion would no longer existed among the French, that the dangers of brainwash were minimal. In the new milieu, Turks and French citizens developed a new intimacy. As a result, "some of the French revolutionary enthusiasm spread to a small but influential body of Turks, looking to the West for advice and inspiration."<sup>61</sup> Apparently Selim did not expect even this to harm him. In fact, in 1793 Selim set up five permanent diplomacies in Europe. He sent Christians and Muslims there to study not only the local language but the customs and lifestyles. The turbulent times in Europe with the French Revolution, followed by efforts to restore the monarchy, the Napoleonic Wars, did not provide the best times for such study, but it did enable small groups of Turks to have their first insight into a republican revolution, fuelling their own desire for drastic changes in Istanbul.

In the meanwhile, mild domestic reforms were being introduced, some out of fear of a French-style revolution to ease the dreadful burden on the peasantry and the poor, but others to increase power of the Sultan at the cost of local aristocracies. The governor's terms throughout the empire were limited now to three years, reappointment conditional to public satisfaction. Farm tax was reduced, and was now collected by the Imperial Treasury. The Grand Vizier was also made answerable to the collective vote of the Divan (the Royal advisory panel). In economic matters, the currency that had suffered so severely with inflation and devaluation, most recently due to the Russian wars, had to be strengthened with improved trade balances. The critical need to set up industries and paper mills was recognized. Plans for a merchant marine were also drawn, so that at least some of the international commerce could come to local Muslims and not to foreign businesses and Christian subjects who currently monopolized it. But capital was a huge problem. It was very hard to get finance internally. Early attempts to get finances for this plan from the usual sources, i.e., European countries, were discouraging. It would not be in their interest to make such loans which would make the Turkish economy stronger, less dependent on them.

As we have noted, the Greek and Armenian Christians in Turkey continued to increase their association with Europe; "their main inclination was to cushion the Turks against the impact of undue direct connection with the West, both in trade and diplomacy."<sup>62</sup> If the Muslim Turks became familiar with Europe, learnt

European languages, the importance of these Greeks and Armenians as translators and in foreign trade would be curtailed. For the same reason "their reaction to the French Revolution itself was inclined to be negative, if not indeed hostile... [wealthy Greek and Armenian citizens] who had too much to lose by a change in the existing regime,"<sup>63</sup> i.e., a change to a modernized, democratic Turkey.

As the Ottomans had now, finally, decided to set up "diplomatic embassies on a reciprocal basis in five of the leading European capitals, of which the first was London, at the court of George III,"<sup>64</sup> many Armenians and Greeks sent to these embassies decided that their own long-term prosperity was uncertain under the Ottomans, if the Empire was to become a modernized democratic entity. Therefore they began a movement for independence while they were in Europe. And they quickly found a lot of encouragement.

In 1791 the new French ambassador General Aubert-Dubayet arrived in Istanbul. With the restitution of all French rights by Turkey, he brought with him French engineers, artillerymen, and drill sergeants. But the Janissaries, as always, were loath to learn new ways. They still refused to believe that European barbarians, so backward until recently, could actually have something to teach the highly advanced Muslim society in general and the Janissaries in particular! But soon, the extent of French influence reached such a level, that even high officials in Sultan Selim's court were very concerned. In his personal journal, January 1792, Ahmed Effendi, the Sultan's private secretary, wrote "May God cause the upheaval in France to spread like syphilis to the enemies of the [Turkish] Empire, hurl them into prolonged conflict with one another and thus accomplish results beneficial to the Empire, amen."<sup>65</sup>

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Sultan Selim III was not the only ruler frightened by the French revolution into attempting reforms, questionable though some of them were. European monarchs everywhere were terrified. Initially they tried, and continued to try, to restore the French monarchy on the throne. At first all such attempts failed. England was particularly concerned not only with the danger to its own aristocratic system, but with Napoleon's objectives in general. His conquests in Europe caused them great concern. But Napoleon was also voicing respect for Islam and Britain refused to believe this was genuine respect. It could only mean that he had designs to conquer the Muslim world, that he was intent to control Egypt as the route to India, even as a conduit to Far East trade.

A large French fleet and naval fleet sailed east in April 1798 for Egypt. French merchants in Cairo had been pleading with their government to help them overcome British domination in Egypt; Napoleon himself was already thinking of digging a canal through the Isthmus of Suez (which Turkey's Grand Vizier Sokullo had thought about more than two centuries before), to supersede British control of the Red Sea and thereby "assume the free and exclusive possession of that sea to the French Republic" says Kinross, a Briton.



On his way to Egypt, Napoleon captured Malta, then sailed into Alexandria and marched into Cairo. "Egypt was awakened from a long sleep by the first Christian force to penetrate into the heartland of Islam since the time of the Crusades" says Kinross. This was not true, of course. The "heartland of Islam" had never been free of Christian forces in one or another form of Crusades since those early Crusades. But every Briton is conditioned to be negative about Napoleon.

Christian forces had continued their penetration, using religious rationales at times, national interests at others, for this penetration, through armed forces or through Machiavellian craftiness. A significant proof of their craftiness is the fact that the word "Crusade" had ceased to be used in political speeches now, except when the emotional hysteria it could arouse were essential.<sup>66</sup>

Napoleon was unique in some ways, in that he seemed quite sincere in his respect for Islam as a religion — which angered Christian Europe. He really angered Christian Europe when he "told the shahkhs of the great Islamic University mosque of Al-Azhar that he was a disciple of Muhammad."<sup>67</sup> And, he is reported to have said, then and later "*Nous sommes les vrais Mussulmans*" ("In essence, we are all Muslims"). He claimed that it was not with any intent to harm Muslims or to destroy Muslims or their religion that the French came; it was to free the Muslim world from the diabolical and selfish British and the corrupt Muslim leadership (in Egypt the Mamluks) who had sold their country's best interests to the British. Even as he defeated the Mamluks at the battle of the Pyramids in the summer of 1798 and took Cairo, he proclaimed himself the "liberator." "The Mamluks, not the Turks, are my true enemies"<sup>68</sup> he proclaimed, seeking to reassure the Sultan in Istanbul that this action in Egypt was not out of enmity towards the Ottomans, who still were, after all, the nominal overlords of Egypt.

Under English persuasion, however, the Ottoman Sultan was not willing to see it that way. And that led, eventually, to certain disaster for the Ottomans.

### ( 13 )

The English aristocracy naturally hated the French Revolution and Napoleon in particular. British intellectual and award-winning writer Hilaire Belloc in his 1934 *Shorter History of England* wrote "England had become newly great as an aristocratic Protestant state. Democracy was (and remains) abhorrent to her political temper, and the idea of social equality is profoundly alien to her character... Was she to suffer transformation and perhaps decline through this power of the new egalitarian enthusiasm sweeping over Europe?"<sup>69</sup>

From the English government point of view, worse was to follow. Despite its efforts to restore monarchy in France, not only had the revolution succeeded but now there was this wretched Napoleon Bonaparte who had proceeded to threaten England's cherished colonial aspirations in the Middle East and in India. In the seventeenth century France had competed with England for the control of India, but had then withdrawn, reportedly because France felt uncertain about setting up a colony in a culture so alien to her own (though later it did colonize in

the Far East). The field had then been left open for England in India, especially after the colonizing powers reached an agreement between them on the carving up of colonial zones in the Far East (e.g., Ceylon was conceded to England by Holland).

Napoleon insisted that he had no colonial aspirations, that after his phenomenal conquests in Europe, he was in Asia to free the local lands from colonialism. In Egypt, he claimed not only to truly respect Islam but again used the phrase that Christian Europe phrase hated: "*Nous sommes les vrais Mussulmans*" he said ("We are all really Muslims"). Napoleon keenly sought a French-Egyptian cultural alliance. It was his men who discovered the Rosetta Stone, the key to Egyptian hieroglyphics which opened up the ancient civilization: "Bonaparte... brought with him to Egypt a party of 165 scientists, artists and men of letters. This mission of savants set up Arabic and French printing presses in Cairo and founded Institut d'Egypte in imitation of the Institute National in Paris. Its members studied the antiquities and languages of ancient Egypt and laid the foundations of Egyptology."<sup>70</sup>

England hated Napoleon Bonaparte more than ever for his contemptuous attitude towards the English. Roughly translated, the world heard, he had called England "a nation of shopkeepers", suggesting that the English were no more than exploitative tradesmen with pretence of culture which they had mainly borrowed from the French And this after the English aristocracy had taken such great pains for generations now to establish itself as a superior breed of humans, who were entitled to superior privilege, at home and abroad! England and other monarchies were determined now to crush Napoleon in Egypt itself. But to do so, they needed legitimacy through the Ottoman Sultan. It is impossible to tell just what pressures they used to convince the Ottoman Sultan that he must join their alliance. Certainly Selim III knew all too well that his nation was weaker and more vulnerable than ever, and that Christian Europe and Russia were undoubtedly aiming to grab the lion's share of it when the time was ripe. After all, the Ottoman Empire was weak but it was still considerable in size, despite the parts already taken by the enemies. It still consisted of Turkey, Rumania, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia, Greece, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Hejaz, Kuwait, and Aden.

Despite the terrible lessons of the recent past, Turkey now took the incredible step, under British pressure, and joined in alliance with Russia, England and the Pope and declared war on Napoleon. Just months before, Russia had all but destroyed the Turks with its invasions. England and Austria had played a part in that Russian campaign. For centuries, the popes had passionately called for the destruction of the Muslim world and the Ottoman nation. Yet now, Turkey was willing not only to get into an alliance with Russia, Austria and England, but with the Pope! The Pope's own hate for the French Republic and Napoleon was of course easily explained. Though a Catholic country, France's revolution had led to a secular government, and therefore - in the pope's view - deserving of condemnation. Could it be that the moronic Sultan actually believed that he could perhaps win favor with the Pope if he joined the alliance?

In Istanbul, at Sultan Selim III's orders, the French ambassador and other French subjects were imprisoned; the British and Turkish forces arrested French

merchants and froze their trade at the harbors. Meanwhile a Russian fleet sailed into the Black Sea and was "honorably welcomed and visited by the Sultan in person."<sup>71</sup> The Russian-Austrian fleet then sailed into the Mediterranean in partnership with the Turkish fleet, recaptured the Ionian Islands from the French "established over them a Russo-Turkish protectorate, and as incongruously cooperated in *aiding the Pope against the allies of Napoleon on the Italian coasts*."<sup>72</sup>

This new alliance, under the lead of England's Lord Nelson destroyed the French fleet in Aboukir Bay, leaving Napoleon's army stranded in Egypt. Napoleon gathered his troops, moved by land to Syria with support from the Mamluks and dissident Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire. He returned to France to become First Consul. In the Middle East, the Treaty of Amiens was signed in 1802, whereby the Ottomans regained sovereignty over Egypt, displacing the Mamluks.

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Britain had won over the local chieftain in the port of Aden, a vital sea link between the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. As in India, this treaty was eventually to lead to British occupation of this port. In the Persian Gulf, the British also wooed the local chieftain of another strategic part of the Ottoman nation, a tail end Bedouin territory called Kuwait. Historically, this territory had been under the suzerainty of what is now Iraq. So Britain now induced the moronic Sultan Selim to establish a residency for the East India Company at Baghdad. Britain used this foothold not only to thwart other European colonialists but soon obtained highly lucrative treaties with local chieftains for the British Empire.. Sultan Selim sought to appease the French after his recent war against them, returned their properties and freed French citizens, restored their Capitulation benefits. Interest in French culture were renewed.

Western historians report that the Janissaries revolted in the Balkan segment of the nation. They grabbed lands of the Turkish cavalry, and they are reported to have oppressed the Christian peasants, who appealed to the Sultan. The Sultan threatened the Janissaries, but did not have the Turkish armed forces locally capable of overpowering them. And then, no doubt seeking to impress Christian Europe how "secular" he was, Sultan Selim made a decision which, at the time may have seemed to a minor one, but which, from the perspective of the gruesome holocausts upon the Bosnians in the 1990s, must rank as the most foolhardy decision even for a Sultan who seemed to specialize in stupidity. *He provided arms and training to Serbia's peasants to crush the Janissaries.*<sup>74</sup>

Sultan Selim III had initially instructed the local army in Bosnia to crush the Janissaries' insurrection. But then the Sultan also gave permission "to an insurrection against Janissary rule by the Serbians themselves... This peasants' revolt provided the unusual spectacle of a Christian minority rebelling *not against but on behalf of* its Moslem sovereign... [the Janissaries] were nonetheless wholly defeated and their tyranny broken, with the proud exhibition by the [Serbian] Christians of the

four bleeding heads of their [Janissary] chiefs in the Serbian camps. All Serbia was now in the hands of the Serbians themselves."<sup>75</sup>

The Sultan may have thought the Serbs were acting in his behalf, but the Serbs, now thoroughly emboldened by their own new status, decided they could take more. After this victory, "the Sultan now required the Christian *rayas* [the Serb peasants] to lay down their arms and return to their flocks and herds. But their victory had aroused in the Serbians a *nationalist temper which was not to be quelled. Given military training [by the Ottomans]... they had now developed a proud fighting spirit*"<sup>76</sup> (italics added). The Serbs led by Kara [Black] George, a peasant leader, "a trader in swine" asked Russia for support "as fellow Christians of the Greek church."<sup>77</sup> It was the reawakening of Serbian ambitions for a "Greater Serbia" under cover of Christianity and Sultan Selim had brought it about.

With Russian backing, the Serbs now made their demand for independence to the Sultan, who voiced fury at their ingratitude and double-cross and rejected their demand. But the Serbs had military strength now in Serbia, so in the skirmishes that followed, the Serb revolutionaries were successful in ousting the small, remaining Turkish force, and sought Russian support to declare their independence. Russia, while supporting the Serbs, along with Britain, still wanted Turkish support in another possible confrontation against France. But the Sultan had finally realized that its own rash alliance with the Pope, Russia, Britain and Austria against Napoleon had been a mistake. Napoleon (now Emperor) did not hold any grudge, however, even made friendly overtures to the Sultan, sent former priest Francois Abating as ambassador, whom the Turks liked (contrary to popular belief, several French priests had sided with the revolution). The Sultan summoned up enough courage to ignore Russian and British pressures against Napoleon, and recognized Napoleon as Emperor of France.

Russia was furious. It demanded that the Sultan must grant to Russia the right to intervene within the Turkish nation on matter pertaining to Orthodox Christians. Prompted by French ambassador Sabatini, Turkey rejected this demand. And he removed Turkey's appointees in Wallachia and Moldavia, "both were known to be Tzarist agents, and believed also to have fermented the troubles in Serbia through Kara George."<sup>78</sup> Immediately, the Tsar sent "a Russian army, without a previous declaration of war, marched into Moldavia and Wallachia which it speedily overran, entering Bucharest and preparing to cross the Danube."<sup>79</sup>

Britain sided with Russia, but Turkey "refused to be cowed into submission by the threats of the British ambassador, who demanded a renewal of its alliances with Britain and Russia and the dismissal of the ambassador of France." Instead Turkey declared war on Russia. Britain, angry that Turkey was getting too close to Napoleon, sent a fleet into the Sea of Marmara, demanding surrender of the Ottoman fleet, "threatening to burn it and to bombard Istanbul." But the French now helped Turkey to assemble its defense. Even Istanbul's ancient canons were put into operation and they destroyed two of British Admiral Duckworth's ships. Duckworth hastily retreated.<sup>80</sup>



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But Britain was not done. After withdrawing from Istanbul, the British fleet invaded and conquered Alexandria, and then Rosetta at the Nile. The Turkish forces repulsed the British, and the new strong man of Egypt, the Albanian Mehmet Ali, (who the British were keen to befriend) arranged for Britain's withdrawal from Egyptian soil, but *not* from the area. In fact Mehmet Ali agreed to provide naval and military supplies to the British in the Mediterranean.<sup>81</sup> reports Kinross.

In the meanwhile, the Sultan had domestic problems. As a result of the huge new military expenditures since 1805 when Russia had invaded, the Sultan had imposed new taxes to pay to fortify and improve Turkey's military. Now, sensing an irate public's support, Janissaries rebelled again, and defeated the Sultan's new troops at Anatolia. The Janissaries also had the support of many of the orthodox *Ulema* and reactionaries. The Sultan gave in. He suspended reforms, dismissed his reform-minded advisors and appointed the head of the Janissaries as Grand Vizier. Confident that he had now soothed down the Janissaries, in 1807, this feeble-minded Sultan ordered new uniforms on European lines! This angered the Janissaries and they revolted again. This time it led to a civil war. The Sultan was deposed after it was decided that his government had "introduced among Moslems the manners of infidels and shown an intention to suppress the Janissaries, the true defenders of the law and the prophets."<sup>82</sup> His young cousin Mustafa, now became Sultan. "What Suleiman the Lawgiver had achieved 250 years earlier, in terms of the East and the traditions of Islam, Selim sought to achieve in terms of the West and the new spirit of secularization. He failed."<sup>83</sup> This assessment by Kinross, reveals his state of mind.

Mustafa IV's reign, however, was very short. Mustafa Bayrakdar, the pasha of Rustchuk (on the Danube) was apparently keen of the continuance of Selim's Europeanization program. He arrived with a large force of Bosnians and Albanians, defeated the Janissaries, broke into the palace, and demanded that Selim III be restored to the throne. But Selim was reportedly executed. Bayrakdar then forced Mustafa off the throne anyway. Mahmud was the sole surviving male heir to the throne now. He became Sultan Mehmed II with Bayrakdar as his Grand Vizier.

Now the "reform" measures, (essentially attempting to Europeanize not just the armed forces but society in general) were put into effect by Mehmed II, aiming also for secularism on the style that Selim III had sought. But then the overconfident Bayrakdar sent his Bosnian and Albanian forces home. The Janissaries revolted again. In the resultant burning of the palace, Bayrakdar was killed. The "reforms" were halted.

In some ways the recent Sultans' rush to "westernize" was understandable. The nation was on the brink of destruction, the European powers held the upper hand, they could and did what they wished with it, and recent sultans no doubt felt that the only alternative left was to appease them by doing what they demanded, and reducing the influence of Islam. Perhaps even Napoleon's sympathetic approach to Muslims was embarrassing to Turkey's leadership, at this stage, when they were

seeking to imitate Europe mainly to please Europe. Europe now found convenient to wipe from memory its own very primitive state until the very recent past. But Turkey had not and some at the Porte found it amusing when Europeans claimed any form of superiority. Apparently it never occurred to the sultans that even though they themselves were almost entirely of European blood, no matter how "secular" any sultan made Turkey, Europe would always find it useful to call the Ottomans "barbaric, Asian" intruders in Christendom.

So like Selim, Sultan Mehmed II also decided it was critical for Turkey's survival to accept Europe's ideas of reforms. The seeds of Selim's Francophile policies had already been sown. "After his time, this was destined to penetrate the fortress of Islam, gradually widening its horizons throughout the nineteenth century from a tentative spring into an enveloping flood,"<sup>84</sup> says Kinross. But of course no one seemed to realize that Liberty and Equality in the French sense was different from what was advocated under the norms of Islam. And Fraternity "which was to take the form of Nationality throughout the Ottoman Empire, with its Christian minorities and in the Islamic world as a whole" was to lead first towards European-style democratization and then to the annihilation of the Ottoman State.

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Mehmed II's mother was French, but had *not* favored the French revolution. Under French influence, Turkey had just signed a two-year armistice with Russia, aware that at any time Russia could begin invasions once again. But Britain and other European powers were concerned about a new Russo-French alliance, and Turkey's leaning towards it through French influence. So Britain in 1809 made overtures to Turkey for a reconciliation, to which Mehmed agreed. His relations with France took a dive now, as once more he believed the English who said there was a secret pact signed by Napoleon with Russia in 1807 to divide the Ottoman Empire between them. What did happen was Russia, ignoring the two-year armistice, crossed the Danube, invaded the Ottoman Empire, capturing Silistria and then Rustchuk. Only about two years before, Britain and Russia as allies had invaded Turkey, because of the Sultan's friendship with France!

Russia, says Kinross, was intent to march upon Istanbul, but in 1811 Russia's alliance with France was broken and now Tsar Alexander had to rethink, fearful of a more serious problem: a French invasion of Russia. Just before Napoleon's Grand Army marched upon Moscow, the Tsar rushed to offer a peace treaty to the Ottomans, which they happily signed. Under the Treaty of Bucharest, Russia agreed to return the conquered areas of Bulgaria, Moldavia and Wallachia back to Turkey. The violent Serbia was also given back to Turkey.

So now when Napoleon pressured Turkey to join in his invasion of Russia, Turkey declined. Napoleon would be defeated and exiled the second time, then conveniently die. France would return to its pre-revolutionary policies, even though there would be other "Napoleons" of his family as emperors.

(17)

Napoleon replaced the Directory and became Emperor of France in 1804. His military campaign in Southern Europe, known as the Peninsula War lasted six years, drained France's resources; Napoleon's march upon Russia was abortive and very costly in lives. The collective force of European monarchs defeated him in 1813, imprisoned him at Elba, and placed a Bourbon king on the French throne. However Napoleon escaped in 1815, was enthusiastically received by the French populace, but the odds were heavily against him in his fresh campaign to defeat his European enemies. *Yet he had almost defeated the British at Waterloo that same year when Prussian forces led by General Blücher arrived and crushed Napoleon's forces.* Napoleon was exiled to the Isle of St. Helena and died there. There were strong suspicions that he had been killed with arsenic poisoning.

There are legitimate questions that can be raised about Napoleon. Did he conquer in order to remove barbaric values of the colonialists, as he claimed, or was that only an excuse, like those that other colonial powers had used? Did he appoint his own brothers and senior aides as Kings because he needed thoroughly reliable allies against foes like Britain, Russia or was it to set up his own dynasty?

What we do know, without doubt, is that by the time he was defeated, Napoleon had redesigned Europe. He had dissolved the Holy Roman Empire, made one brother Joseph King of Spain, made his brother Louis King of Holland, two marshals rulers of Sweden and Naples, created a new German state out of Prussia and set in motion the formation of Italy as a country. The legal system he set up, known as the Napoleonic Code, was to become the core not only of France's legal system, but after the ancient Mesopotamian Code of Hammurabi, the first system from which countries everywhere in Europe drew inspiration. That there was some idealism in Napoleon's movement is reflected in the fact that his Marshall, Jules Bernadotte (later appointed ruler of Sweden) went to India to fight alongside the lost cause of Tipu Sultan against the British, despite Britain's overwhelming military superiority.<sup>73</sup>

While Napoleon was to be vilified in Britain in his time and even more thoroughly by English-language historians of the future, it was Britain that benefited most, in the long run, from the Napoleonic era. Almost two centuries after Ottoman vizier Fazıl Koprulu had thought of it, it was Napoleon who thought of and set in motion the process of creating the Suez Canal. *Britain had scoffed at the idea*, then saw it huge benefits after it was built, and squeezed Egypt's shares of the Canal from it in payment of debt (at about one-tenth the price paid by Egypt). And the Napoleonic wars in Europe left other European countries weak. Britain, the island state, escaped relatively unscathed, its naval power supreme after Napoleon's (therefore French) naval power had been crushed. So Britain became the dominant world power.

No doubt Napoleon had his own designs on ruling the Muslim world. But Turkey clearly did not realize the important role Napoleon had played in restraining the rest of Europe upon the "unspeakable Turk". With Napoleon gone, Europe soon intensified its covert operations against Turkey. The separation of Greece from Turkish rule was the prime target now for the Europeans.

Some of the Greece islands had been allowed autonomy by the Ottomans. But literary and artistic Europe's new romance with ancient Greece was eulogized by European newspapers alongside hysteria against the "unspeakable Turk".

The Greeks themselves were somewhat stunned to be made the symbol of European civilization, when just a few centuries before neither their own ancestors nor Europeans had considered Greece to be a mere "Orthodox" outpost of Europe. But it pleased them of course. Yet, while activists were keen on independence, much of the Greek population was *not*. While thrilled that their pre-Christian culture (about which they were very vague) was being now called the cradle of European civilization, there was the current reality. They found their own local leaders to be more corrupt and tyrannical than the Turks. "Enjoying and abusing a privileged position in the maintenance of law and order, they [the local Christian leaders] were often harsh in their oppression of their fellow Christians. As oppressive in its own way was the Christian priesthood, narrow and conservative in its outlook, which as part of the civil establishment enjoyed the Sultan's protection and wielded a wide authority over the Greek population." Greek masses had voiced their preference for Turkish rule often in the past as well. Even many prominent Greeks wished Turkey's rule to remain. *"There prevailed - among clerics, landowners and local officials - Greek vested cultural interests, which had too much to lose by supporting any transition from a Greek cultural renaissance to a Greek political revolution in terms of national independence."*<sup>75</sup>

The hysterical support from Europe for Greek independence was overwhelming, however. Gradually it gained momentum among the Greek masses, despite the fact that those leading the movement were brigands, "the *klephts*, wild, lawless bands which had long ranged the mountains to evade Turkish authority, living by banditry and violence,"<sup>76</sup> who had for generations created havoc among the Greeks populace themselves as well as among the Turks. But gradually, with European image-making aroused the passions for independence of the geek masses; even the brigands and their "their traditional profession of brigandage now rose in Greek esteem beyond that of mere rapacity to become acknowledged as an honourable and legitimate weapon against Ottoman tyranny." It thus developed into a patriotic focus of revolt in the Greek nationalistic cause" (italics added).<sup>77</sup> Now those very Christian police whom the Turks had armed to fight and capture these brigands joined with the brigands, with European tacticians aiding the spread of the "spirit of independence". Britain's naval expertise provided training. Along the Greek coasts the *Philike Hetaeria* ("Society of Friends") spread led by a Rumanian poet Rhigas Pheraios. Predictably, the Society was aligned with secret political alliance, arousing passions of a new crusade, to create "a Balkan federation of autonomous Christian states."<sup>78</sup>

While Serbia was now handed back to Turkey by the Russians, the Serb leader Kara (Black) George saw his opportunity and leaped to join the Greek movement. The Turks became aware of the plots. Pheraios was captured and executed. But in 1814, the Society revived, this time in Russia, with branches everywhere in Eastern Europe "a conspiratorial Freemasonry, with its elaborate



hierarchy, secret signs, mysterious rituals, and a solemn oath of allegiance. Its plots and intrigues stirred elements of sedition among the Balkan communities.<sup>789</sup> But the Society itself was thrilled because it received huge support from Western Europe.

## ( 18 )

In some ways, it should be understood that a mass movement of those of different religious affiliation, even if their *ethnic* identity may be vague, that movement, if backed by powerful *outside* forces, leads to a groundswell all its own.

The initial revolt was launched by the Society of Friends' new leader Ypsilantis *not* in Greece but in Moldavia and Walachia. Ypsilantis was Greek and had been an aide to the Russian Tsar. The revolt was abortive. The locals were not interested in this rebellion emanating from plots in Russia. Once it failed, "the Tsar disowned him, and expelled him from his army. The ecumenical Patriarch excommunicated him at the Sultan's behest. The Turks sent an army to Bucharest, which wiped out his [Ypsilantis'] 'sacred battalion' and Ypsilantis himself fled into Austrian territory, where the emperor imprisoned him"<sup>790</sup> (Kinross does not tell us why a Christian priest would be excommunicated "at the behest of the Sultan").

Nevertheless the Greek revolution was soon launched in March 25, 1821. The Greek rebels were aided by what some Western history books call a fleet of "privateers" from Europe. "Throughout the peninsula the popular song of the revolt 'Not a Turk Shall Remain in the Morea' inspired indiscriminate and murderous action against all Moslems."<sup>791</sup> The Sultan retaliated angrily to the Morean massacre of Muslims by executing prominent Greeks in Istanbul.

By now passions for Greek independence had spread. On New Year's Day 1822, a Greek constitution was drafted. "From early stage the Greeks had counted... on Western support. In the military sense they were soon disappointed."<sup>792</sup> The simple fact was that while each of the Western powers was willing to provide *covert* assistance, they did not want to *overtly* side with the Greeks. They did provide some spying, some financial assistance, some pirates ("privateers") and individual military leaders - as individuals - to direct the revolution. Officially, each European power sought to keep the Sultan in a friendly relationship for the present, especially as Christian Europe's trade with Turkey continued to be very lucrative.

This diplomatic tightrope walk was achieved by Europe's *politicians* formally denouncing the Greek revolt. But a powerful campaign was underway concurrently within each European country in the press, providing lengthy accounts of Turkish brutalities, Muslim barbarism, the glories of ancient Greek as the fountain of Western Civilization. The European public and gradually the Greek masses themselves therefore "saw the Greeks not merely as oppressed Christians but as the brave descendants of the classical age."<sup>793</sup> The poets, collectors of antiquities, men and women of letters, combined their attachment to ancient Greece with their contempt for Muslims and Islam based upon the "truths" they were taught in their schooling and through the press. They passionately supported the Greek cause. It is doubtful

if Europe's masses, *only recently becoming literate*, knew that Greek brigands were the main force behind the "revolution", or that it was *Austrian bombardment that had destroyed ancient treasures in Athens, such as the Parthenon*.

Huge contributions were collected for the "Greek cause" and Lord Byron, the poet, as the representative of this public drive, "who had immortalized it in verse"<sup>794</sup> went with these funds to Greece in 1824, only to have all that money spent in battles between ambitious Greek leaders and their factions, admits Kinross. Had Byron ever known that Muslims had painstakingly brought Greek Thought to life when the Church condemned it as pagan, and did its best to obliterate it from the face of the earth? Now this British poet (*not* the most talented of them), saw Greece of his romantic dreams, the symbol of ancient Hellenism, that erased from the public mind Byron's incestuous sex scandals and made him into a hero larger than life, especially when he fell ill there and died. The Greek cause rose to a new crescendo of romance and hysteria in England.

## ( 19 )

To some it was a surprise that Russia did *not* support this Greek independence movement. Russia, from the times of Tsar Peter and Tsarina Catherine had piously claimed that their frequent invasions of Turkish territories were to obtain freedom for Christians, especially the Byzantines. Why, then, did Russia not support this Greek independence movement? Because this was a now a Greek movement seeking to create a Greece *independent* of Russia. As Mansfield points out "Russia did not favor the birth of a new Christian state in the Levant unless it would be under Tsarist control." In 1825, the Sultan recognized the dangers and "summoned to his aid his powerful vassal Mehmet Ali, the Albanian-born pasha of Egypt."<sup>795</sup> Mehmet Ali's son Ibrahim Pasha was sent in command of a large naval force against the Greek revolutionary forces. Ibrahim Pasha had considerable successes in his battles with the revolutionaries. The Greek army was led by Britain's Sir Richard Church and the naval force commanded by Britain's Lord Cochrane. Britain officially claimed to disapprove of the Greek revolution, yet both the naval and army force of the revolutionaries were led "unofficially" by Britons! These two factions of revolutionaries were hostile to each other, says Kinross, as *each supported a different candidate for the Greek presidency*. The two Britons succeeded in arranging for a truce between the two revolutionary factions, so that they might present a common opposition to the Turks. They decided upon another new constitution and compromised on one president named Capodistria. This made the revolutionaries stronger and coordinated. Nevertheless Cochrane's forces were defeated in a battle for Athens against Ibrahim Pasha, in 1827.

This was bad news for European politicians who had hoped that with the two British military men at the helm, the Greek forces would defeat the Turks, while Europe *officially* disapproved of the revolution. So now the European Powers had to intervene *officially*. Newspapers in Europe were commercially owned but the leading ones, especially in Britain (where the old "patriotism... the language of

the English" was now deeply entrenched), followed the government foreign policy when it was most profitable to do so. So now they continued to arouse public anger with tales of Turkish brutality. As Lord Kinross tells us, in good diplomatic style, "English consciences had been outraged by tales of the atrocities of Ibrahim Pasha, [this was the son of Mehmet Ali who had recently saved British vessels!] who was reputed to be enslaving the Greeks with a view to the repopulation of the Peloponnese with Egyptians. Public opinion was stirred above all by the heroic sacrifice, in so noble a cause, of Lord Byron."<sup>96</sup> Reports of Byron's affair with his own sister and other sexapades which had appalled the public were forgotten now in this moral outrage against the Turks.

In July 1827, a month after Ibrahim Pasha had defeated Cochrane's forces at Athens, a treaty was signed in London between Britain and Russia (the latter now saw that it may have something to gain by involvement). France soon joined them. The treaty required that Greece must be granted autonomy from the Turks in return for an annual tribute to the Sultan. The Sultan "denounced it as a flagrant violation by the foreigner of his full and legitimate sovereign rights."<sup>97</sup> The European powers claim to be "outraged" at this denunciation, even though time and again, these powers had claimed to respect Turkey's sovereign rights. But this "outrage" was the only excuse available to Britain, France and Russia who not only proclaimed their alliance as officially supportive of the Greek revolutionaries against Turkey but sent their forces.

The naval fleets of Britain, France and Russia assembled in the Mediterranean to enforce the terms of an "armistice" they had decided upon between themselves. Ibrahim Pasha refused "to accept the armistice without the Sultan's orders."<sup>98</sup> According to the British version (reported by Kinross) for some suicidal reason, he says *one* Egyptian ship fired at the three allied ships! Only in "retaliation", therefore, "a naval engagement inevitably followed. In this Ibrahim's fleet was all but annihilated." The allies, says Kinross, were all unhappy to have done this. He quotes the Duke of Wellington (soon to be Prime Minister) who called it an "untoward event." In spite of this "sadness" the Duke of Clarence (soon to be King William IV) rewarded the British admiral involved, Edward Codrington, with a knighthood for crushing the Turks!

In the meanwhile, the new Greek leader Capodistria had been touring European capitals and now returned to set up a government in 1828. The French defeated the remaining Turkish forces in the area, and Russia now felt it was opportune to launch a full-scale war against the Turks in the Balkans as well as on the Asian borders of the Ottoman domain.

Tsar Nicholas personally led his forces across the Pruth in 1828, crossed the Danube, through the Balkan range towards Istanbul. The Turks, with their weak military stretched between the British, French and Russians in the Mediterranean and the Russians in the Balkans, put up resistance, won a few victories but were unable to withstand the fierce Russian penetration. Soon the Russians were outside Adrianople, the Turkish capital in the Balkans. Now with a Black Sea fleet providing cover, the Russian commander Diebitsch set out for Istanbul. The Sultan desperately sought Muslim support by calling for the banner of the Prophet and announced he

would personally lead the defence of the capital, but later submitted to pressures, agreed to sign the treaty at Adrianople in 1829.

Western historians acknowledge that the Russians could have suffered serious defeats had the war progressed closer to Istanbul, with its home stretch advantage for the Turks. But as the panic-stricken Turks had sued for peace, the Russians could dictate terms to some degree. The terms of the Treaty of Adrianople gave the Russians a part of Moldavia and other provinces providing control of the Danube; Moldavia and Walachia were to have total autonomy, with their own rulers, their own armies, and the entire Muslim population of these countries was to be expelled from them. Serbia was to get full independence, along with the fortresses of Belgrade and Orsova. And in Asia, the Russians acquired Georgia from the Turks, as well as various parts of the Caucasus.<sup>99</sup>

The Treaty of Adrianople affirmed the conditions that Britain and Russia had decided upon in their London conference. Now the Turks were forced to accede to the creation in 1830 of a new Greece, totally independent of Turkey. The Turks were allowed to keep Crete, Thessaly and Albania to the north.

The European leaders decided that the new Greek state must have a new hereditary monarch, with the title of "Sovereign Prince of Greece." Significantly, the choice made by "the Great Powers" was Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, who just happened to be the son-in-law of King George IV of Britain. Capodistria, the man the same "Great Powers" had selected to lead the Greek revolution as its President, furiously objected and received strong support for his cause within Greece. But then Capodistria was conveniently assassinated. Leopold, sensing anger from Capodistria supporters, accepted the crown of Belgium instead. The European powers conferred the Greek crown on King Ludwig of Bavaria.

## (20)

Mehmed II (dubbed "The Reformer" in some Western history books) was convinced that the European Powers would only allow the Ottoman Empire to survive if it divorced itself completely from Islam. So after seventeen years as sultan, and now with the open assault on his empire from all the major European powers, Mehmed recommenced radical changes with a fierce hand.

First he established the full powers of the sultanate, knowing that there could be serious opposition within the state to many of his reforms. "In pursuit of centralization... he set to work to suppress all local powers deriving from inheritance, tradition, custom or popular consent."<sup>100</sup> And "he rid himself of his own rebellious pashas... a culmination of these operations had been his ruthless suppression of Ali Pasha in Janina."<sup>101</sup> Then he decided to eliminate the Janissaries. Secretly he had already commenced to create his own army, trained on European lines, far more disciplined and with superior modern European artillery. But to ensure that he received the support of the *Ulema* he ensured that they were trained not by Europeans but by Turkish Muslims. And, he included in their number some Janissaries who were agreeable to divorce themselves from that unit.



The demands of European powers upon the Ottoman rulers to move away from Islamic heritage, was obvious to all in the empire, especially the *Ulema*. Recognizing the grim reality, they were willing to accept further Europeanization, as long as it achieved some of the reforms they so earnestly sought themselves. They objected fiercely to the total abandonment of Islamic laws and directives.

The majority of the Janissaries of course remained fiercely against further "Europeanization" of the armed forces. They revolted, swarmed into the Hippodrome. To win support from the public Sultan Mehmed II went through the ritual of unfolding the Prophet's standard, and had even named his new army "The Victorious Muslim Soldier." Convinced that this would soothe the religious Muslims, Mehmed proceeded to use his European shells to bombard the Janissaries' barracks. Many thousands of the Janissaries died from the bombardment, others from the resultant fires. "Such, within little more than half an hour, was the extermination by modern arms of the nucleus of a military force five centuries old."<sup>102</sup> But it did more. It demonstrated to the public the enormous power of these new European armaments, and how effective they were compared to the old-fashioned forms of warfare. And it also proved that individual bravery and skills in the battlefield were gradually to become a quality of the past. In the 20th century nations who won wars would be those who had the most powerful and the most prolific firepower, not the bravest and able military force. Ironically, the Ottomans first used this firepower against its own Janissaries.

The extermination of the remaining Janissaries "was completed with unremitting severity, by a slaughter throughout the provinces of thousands more [Janissaries]. On the same day the Sultan abolished, by proclamation, the corps of the Janissaries; their name was proscribed and their standards destroyed. A month later the brotherhood of the Bektashi dervishes [a Sufi order], who had for centuries aided and abetted them, was outlawed, with the destruction of its convents [i.e., cells in which they withdrew for meditation and prayer], the public execution of its principal leaders, and the exile of its adherents."<sup>103</sup>

Western historians praised Mehmed II for this, then and later; even Kinross considers him, "a strong, wise Sultan [who] had reestablished the autocracy of his earlier Ottoman forebears... Mehmed II pursued no despotic end, but rather a despotic means to an end which was in essence progressive". The rulers of Europe of his time were especially pleased with his actions.

Mehmed II now proceeded with even more drastic military reforms. This was not too pleasing to the rulers of Europe who did not wish to see Turkey become once more a viable military power. France and Britain offered to train the Turkish military, but even Mehmed II was afraid of public reaction if he entrusted these two powers with the task. Initially, in 1838, Britain was permitted to send some naval officers to train the Turks, but the public had "a slighting attitude towards them"<sup>104</sup> says Kinross. The modernizing process was first entrusted to Egypt's Mehmet Ali whose forces were by now far more modernized than the Turkish forces. Then the Prussians were entrusted with the training. The Turkish public did not have any newspapers to inform or direct public thinking, but the

destruction of the nation under British control over the years had apparently been so obvious that even without media reports, public indignation at Britain's very presence in Istanbul.

Sultan Mahmud II decided it was time to crush the religious authorities, the *Ulema*, next. Apparently he decided (or was advised) that his subjects, terrorized with his extermination of the Janissaries and the Bektashi dervishes, would not dare object.

The highest rank of the religious order was that of the *Sheikh-ul-Islam*, the Grand Mufti. Mahmud removed the Grand Mufti's role in government affairs and ordered that he should only function in religious affairs of the Muslim populace who followed him. And he set about creating a separate secular legal system for the empire. *He took religious control out of schools by placing them under a Ministry of Education, and all legal responsibilities under a Ministry of Justice.* Next, the state was given control over the old Islamic institution of *ekvaf* (pious foundation), away from the *Ulema*. Religious properties, mosques, all the moneys received through religious donations, *zakath*, etc were now to be handled by the State.<sup>105</sup> *This might have been productive if the replacement was with those of genuine moral integrity, but it was not. The intent was not to conduct genuine reform but to please his European patrons.*

Next, he set about Europeanizing government nomenclatures. He abolished the office of Grand Vezir, renamed it Prime Minister, with a Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a Ministry of Civil Affairs (Interior), a Privy Council. The Treasurer's office was now renamed Ministry of Finance. As the renaming of the Grand Vezir as Prime Minister caused confusion within the empire, the former title soon returned into common use. For his own safety, he continued to draw power away from feudal lords and local armed forces around the Empire.<sup>106</sup>

Then he changed the legal system. Hitherto the *Shari at*, the religious law, did exist, though overshadowed by the *kamun*, the edicts of the Sultan. Now Mahmud introduced a third branch, *adalet* (justice). Under this he appointed a council to devise judicial codes, define the power and role of judges.<sup>107</sup>

And he made considerable changes in the education system, concentrating at first on military schools, and then technical schools. He also started medical schools. For each of these he sought French and Prussian teachers; he founded an imperial music school, also under European tutors. The medical schools and science studies required French as the medium of instructions, and the study of French soon became a pre-requisite; soon French was also the medium for other studies, including literature and European history. Persian had been the medium for some of these studies before, but from this point on, French gradually became the second language in Turkey. Mehmed II introduced a newspaper, reportedly the first in Turkey, which was published in French and Turkish. Like Selim III thirty years before, he maintained embassies in European capitals, and as Greeks were no longer reliable, Turkish Muslims manned these embassies, requiring wider study in European languages. More Turkish students were sent to France for studies. And Mehmed discouraged the wearing of beards, encouraged a change to western clothes, just

as Selim III had tried. But while Selim had met stiff resistance, there was little resistance now. He obtained the consent of the *Ulema*, to replace the Turkish turban with the *fez*. In many of these reforms, Mehmed II had considerable encouragement from the West (Kinross says "he must rank among the greatest of sultans"), and no doubt some of his reforms were in the right direction.

## ( 21 )

What course might history have taken if Mehmed II, using the power he had now garnered, used it for *real* reforms? He could, for instance, have taken an entirely new look at the suicidal trends that had plagued the Muslim world almost from inception, chief among them the hostilities between different schools of thought, especially the Sunnis and the Shiites. What if Turkey, Persia and India had recognized their *individual* crisis as common to all of the Muslim World, recognized their differences were man-made, not religious, arising from ethnic burdens and colonial chicanery? How different would subsequent history have been if these Muslim rulers, their supporters, and especially the *Ulema* of the various schools of thought, had recognized the dire need to iron out their differences in view of the impending doom for the Muslim world and then collectively recognize the need for reforms to shed ethnic burdens from Islam rather than have the rulers, in each Muslim country, attempt "reform" at the direction of colonial powers in the form they demanded?

## ( 22 )

While Mehmed II proceeded with these reforms that were in line with their wishes, the European powers had not distracted him with any new crisis as these reforms. But now there were crisis that would place Mahmud II even more under the control of the European powers. The insurrections came from *within*, from Mehmet Ali of Egypt, and Abdullah ibn Saud of the Hejaz.

In 1805, reports Mansfield (*A History of the Middle East*) the Egyptian public and the Egyptian *Ulema*, disgusted with the Ottoman lifestyle excesses and drastic Europeanization, were behind Mehmet Ali, even though he was an Albanian Muslim who did not even speak Arabic. There was support to make him their leader and eventually replace Khurshid Pasha, the Ottoman governor in Egypt. Sultan Selim III finally agreed to make Mehmet Ali *wali* or Governor of Egypt. No one at the time realized, least of all the Egyptian populace, that a new dynasty was in the making and it, too would be directed eventually by Britain. Mehmet Ali and his progeny would rule Egypt until 1952, when his descendant, "King" Faroukh, was finally ousted.<sup>108</sup>

But in 1820 the popular Mehmet Ali reorganized the armed forces entirely through a *nizam al-jadid* or "New Order." His eldest son Ibrahim (1789-1848) proved to be an outstanding general... at its height in the 1830s, the Egyptian army amounted to a quarter of a million men and was the most formidable force in the Middle East.<sup>109</sup> With such a military force at his command, the ambitious Mehmet

Ali was ready to make his next move. By this time Mehmed II had himself crushed the Janissaries, historically the chief protectors of the sultans within the Empire.

At the start, Mehmet Ali helped the new Sultan consolidate his own position. There had been considerable problems through an insurrection from a tribal chief in the Hejaz. Abdullah ibn Saud and his tribe had become followers of Mohammed ibn Ad al-Wahhab who preached a new strict form of Islam. "Wahhabism emphasized the brotherhood and equality that should prevail among all Muslims, irrespective of tribe or rank."<sup>10</sup> But "they also insisted that the Arabs, not the Turks, should control the Muslim *ummah* and Ibn Sa'ud called a *jihad* against those Arab sharifs who ruled in the Hejaz in the name of the Ottoman Turks... the Wahhabis threatened the provinces of Syria and Iraq: in 1803 they attacked the shrine of Imam Husain at Karbala."<sup>11</sup> Then the invading Ibn Saud and his tribal forces had taken Mecca and Medina.

In 1807 Mehmet Ali had been asked by the Sultan to send a force to the Hejaz to recover Mecca and Medina from the Saudis. According to Mansfield, he waited four years, but then in 1811 he sent his second son Tussan, who recovered Mecca and Medina but his forces suffered heavy casualties. He was replaced by Ibrahim who in May 1818 conquered the Saudi capital Daraiyya, as well as Abdullah ibn Saud who was later executed in Istanbul. By 1824, however, Abdullah's son had strengthened his forces, made Riyadh his capital, and sent a sea force to occupy western Arabia as far as Aden. But Britain had won a treaty of "maritime peace" with the small sheikhdoms (now the United Arab Emirates). By 1839, the British had set up a colony there.

As we have seen, Sultan Mahmud had also invited Mehmet Ali to help put down the uprising in 1821 of his Greek subjects, as Ottoman troops were just not strong enough. In 1825, Ibrahim took his fleet to the Morea and two years later captured Athens. But then Britain and France had defeated both the Ottoman and Egyptian forces, Greece gained its independence. Undeterred by this failure, and in fact encouraged by the growing disorganized state of Ottoman forces, Mehmet Ali demanded Syria as reward for his services to the Sultan. The Sultan refused, so Mehmet Ali sent his son Ibrahim with an army that routed the Ottoman forces so thoroughly that they almost captured Istanbul.

The frantic Sultan now sought European help! He asked the British but they were keen to win Mehmet Ali as an ally, and they refused. The Sultan turned in desperation to Russia. Russia sent troops and ships and Ibrahim agreed to withdraw. Worried that Russian influence would now grow, Britain threatened the Sultan with dire consequences if the Russians were not asked to withdraw. The Russians did withdraw, but only after the Treaty of Hunkiar Iskessi which bound the Ottoman Empire to Russia in an alliance, and allowed Russian ships to use the Dardanelles if Russia was at war. The Sultan soothed Mehmet Ali as well, making his son Ibrahim governor of Syria.

Elated with this victory, Mehmet Ali now had visions of taking over the entire Ottoman Empire, deposing the Sultan, even of becoming Caliph. But then he realized this would be catastrophic as he was an Albanian with no genuine ties to



Arabs or Turks. Ibrahim, in the meanwhile, pleased Europe by allowing Christian missionaries to open schools. "In Syria this meant favoring Christian merchants" says Mansfield. And he imposed a poll tax on *Muslims*.

Now Britain had the problem it had faced before in dealing with the Muslim world. While it clearly controlled Mehmet Ali and supported him, Britain did not want the weak Ottoman Empire to be dismantled completely as yet. Britain's trade in the Ottoman state was very profitable and *Britain did not want competition from the manufacturers from within the Ottoman Empire which Ibrahim was now starting to develop in Syria, even though he was favoring local Christians in their enterprises.*

In 1838 Britain's Lord Palmerston obtained an Anglo-Turkish treaty signed "giving Britain and other European powers the right to trade throughout the Ottoman empire in return for a tariff of only 3 per cent... At one stroke Palmerston's treaty had opened the way to foreign commercial domination of the Ottoman Empire... [Mehmet Ali] had done everything in his power to protect and facilitate British trade across Egypt, but he could not allow Britain to destroy the sources of his independence."<sup>12</sup> He annexed Syria and Egypt, offering Mahmud II three million pounds sterling for their independence. Prompted by Britain, the Sultan declared war on Egypt, but was defeated; in fact much of the Ottoman force elected to *side with Egypt*, and his entire navy sailed there. In the midst of it all, Sultan Mahmud II died.

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His son Abdul Mejid was just 16 when he succeeded. And Britain, until recently an ally of Mehmet Ali, was concerned now with his growing power. So Britain forced Prussia, Austria, Russia and a very reluctant France (which had good relations with Mehmet Ali) into a conference, in London July 1840, and they announced that Mehmet Ali should lose all rights to Syria (where local manufacture by *Christians* was competing with British imports now), remove his forces there and return the Turkish fleet to the Ottoman Empire. Mehmet Ali angrily refused this "foreign" ruling, at which the British fleet under Admiral Napier was sent to invite Syrian to revolt. The governor of Beirut (Lebanon was still part of Syria) refused, so the British fleet bombarded Beirut and an "Anglo-Turkish force landed."<sup>13</sup>

The British had already bribed some Arab leaders in the area to weaken the defenses, sent a force from its Bombay presidency to conquer Aden and attached it to Bombay, in its plan to control waterways to India and *provide a source of rich mineral deposits*. Now Admiral Napier came with a fleet, ready to bomb Alexandria.

Knowing that he could not survive against the European forces, Mehmet Ali surrendered. Under the Treaty of London of 1841, Mehmet Ali was stripped of Syria, Crete and the Hejaz, and forced to reduce his armed forces from one million to 18,000. He was however allowed to remain "hereditary pasha" of Egypt. There, while some industrialization had taken place, crucial engineering projects and commerce were controlled by Europeans, mainly Britons. That "industrialization" which was essentially in European hands, was permitted to remain. But Egyptian entrepreneurs could not start new ventures into industry.

## Chapter 17

# Machiavelli Delivers

( 1 )

It is important to note the enormous wealth that Europe had garnered after the Protestant revolution and Catholic "counter-revolution" reforms. Freed from many of old Church controls, the lay public could *think* and act with relative freedom. But the skills of Machiavellian deceit had sharpened colonial expansionism. Colonialism was gaining victories and vast riches by the year. Huge fortunes were also being made from Europe's slave trade that, since the 17th century, had become a huge industry. African villages (mostly those converted to Islam by the Arabs) were invaded periodically, millions of blacks captured and shipped to the New World, steadily providing the most profitable form of labor there can be — free labor. The slaves were mated carefully to ensure strong offspring, producing an unending flow of new generations of more millions of slaves. All it cost was the expense of their meager upkeep. In the New World, with the steady slaughter of American "Indians" and the seizing of more of their land, more slaves were brought, more fortunes made. When the USA won independence from Britain in 1783, England was bitter. To add insult to injury, the new US attempted to include the British colonies of Canada into its Union; Britain, having ousted the French from that area, declared war on the US in 1812, won, and kept Canada. During the American Civil War, Britain tried to help the Confederates, which infuriated the Lincoln regime. The loss of the American colonies had become sheer agony by now for England, because the US, wrenching lands from the Indians and Mexico, not only spread "from sea to shining sea" but soon discovered fabulous natural wealth from these new lands. But, gradually, Britain brought the new nation in a "special relationship" away from its founding principles and Jeffersonian warnings, with dire consequences.

Passionate yearning for acceptance by British society had always existed in the US. But this became an obsession among the newly-rich millionaires and the governments they brought to power. Recognizing this, "England henceforth

accepted the new power of the United States as one with which she must at all costs and under all conditions remain friendly. From that policy this country [England] has never swerved; it...has governed all our transatlantic relations from that day to this. *The advantage of so singular a position has been that we can create in the non-English-speaking world of the Continent an impression, not yet dissipated, that the United States stand behind us in any threatened disaster; that there is, morally at least, if not technically, an "Anglo-Saxon block[sic]"*<sup>1</sup> reports the eminent British writer Hilaire Belloc in the 1930s.

French had been the language of elite society and of international discourse. When Edward Gibbon commenced his *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* "in 1767 'he planned to write in French, generally accepted as the language of civilization,'"<sup>2</sup> report Britain's Dimbleby and Reynolds. But English had been developing and gaining usage, especially after England's isolation during the Great Plague. When the new US decided to use English as its language (*reportedly a decision by the Founders by just one vote*), England felt this gave it great advantage.

The new nation had idealists as well as exploiters. The idealists, the followers of Rousseau and other Nature Philosophers, *succeeded not in 1776 or even 1783 but after a great struggle, in 1789, to make corrections in their new democracy with the Bill of Rights*. The intellectuals had warned fiercely against allowing English influence to contaminate the new nation; some even sought to have a new language in the US. "Noah Webster, author of the famous dictionary, even called for a new language: 'As an independent nation, our honour requires us to have a system of our own, in language and government' he said,"<sup>3</sup> candidly report Britain's Dimbleby and Reynolds (italics added). But Webster settled for a simplified and somewhat prosaic form of English that did not serve any purpose. But the exploiters who soon controlled the destinies of the nation sought material gain and social status of acceptance by the British aristocracy above all else; to them, any form of English was fine, and it became an easier language for the new millions who now arrived not so much because it was the land of liberty, but because its streets were said to be paved with gold. The concept of true democracy and refined values was increasingly in trouble in the US, except in hypocritical, tired clichés.

England had been agast when the US chose democracy. From a distance of over 220 years, cliché-ridden, superficial flattery incessantly accorded by corporate media *numbs our senses* from truly recognizing what an extraordinary, sophisticated achievement it was for the founders, especially the idealists amongst them, who thought of, planned crafted the American Experiment what an incredible achievement it was to implement it, *while the most powerful forces on earth stood against them, ready to weaken, then crush this heroic undertaking*. England's allies within the US were hostile to revolutionary France from the start, some even agreed to help to restore monarchy in France, *which showed how superficial their own commitment was to Democracy*. But that effort failed. Monarchy was overthrown and replaced with "*liberte, egalite, fraternite*." Napoleon Bonaparte, overthrowing contempt for England, had emerged. "England had become newly great as an aristocratic Protestant state. *Democracy was (and remains) abhorrent to her*

*political temper, and the idea of social equality is profoundly alien to her character*"<sup>4</sup> admitted Mr. Hilaire Belloc a prominent, staunch Briton in his *History* in 1934 "*Was she to suffer transformation and perhaps decline through this power of the new egalitarian enthusiasm sweeping over Europe*"<sup>5</sup> Britain fought the trend fiercely. Once Napoleon was crushed, Britain became more powerful than before, its wealthy now richer than ever before with the conquest of more Asian and African lands, the use of their vast natural resources for Britain's industries. Its foreign policy depended upon (1) seducing the US and (2) the use of force elsewhere. Its expenditure upon wars, on weapons development and on building military arsenals, was huge. There was corruption galore, the South Sea Bubble only the most notorious. British companies and shareholders made fortunes, far more than did the Treasury. Fortunately for Britain's objectives, the new US regimes were not at all as committed to "egalitarian enthusiasm". In fact, the American rich, the products of European lower class over so many generations, thirsted to nestle in close proximity to the British aristocracy.

Periodically, there were eruptions of discontent among the British masses. The aristocracy, with social upheavals elsewhere in Europe, felt it was judicious to make some concessions as long as its hold on government and foreign policy was undisturbed. For the first time in British history, these reforms led to a middle class emerging from the penury of the past. The promise of great profits provided great incentives for inventions to aid mass production. The spinning jenny, the steam engine, the railway had launched the Industrial Age, many other inventions and discoveries followed. But the critical elements for Britain's business and industrial wealth were the colonies. They were ordered to provide raw material at throwaway prices, which Britain fixed. Then they were made to buy British finished products.

By the middle of the 19th century, industrialization in Britain had produced a new "middle class" with money. In addition to the silent bankers behind the aristocracy (*no longer called "usurers" and "moneylenders"*), this burgeoning class now included manufacturers, importers and exporters, prosperous traders. New Money thirsted for social acceptance by Old Money. *But usually Old Money kept them at arm's length except in matters of finance*. In the new, manufacturing, prosperous towns of Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Bradford, with their "rich rascals and poor ragamuffins", the new "sturdy" middle-class millionaires sought status, designing their growing towns with buildings and monuments larger and taller than elsewhere (later, newly-rich American millionaires, notably in Texas, made a similar display of their new money). But middle-class Britain was opposed to "pagan Greece" with which its aristocracy was smitten, but which the middle-class did not understand anyway. They used their new financial muscle at Westminster to demand a Gothic design for the new Parliament buildings in 1834. Elsewhere, they chose Victorian architecture, solid, staid, repetitive, to reflect pragmatic British Thought.

The economic explosion of the Industrial and Colonial Age also changed the topography and social conditions of Britain. More towns sprang up in the second half of the 19th century; while villages emptied of workers who moved to the cities to earn at least a pittance in industry as farming declined. Colonial rule overseas



provided farm products even cheaper to captains of British trade and industry than at home. "Without a proletariat already present, the age of industrial capitalism could never have arrived. *It arose from the concentration of wealth in a few hands*."<sup>6</sup> Britain's economy had skyrocketed with the conquest of the Indian sub-continent, several times its size and many times wealthier in natural resources.

The British masses, the "great beast", the chattel, the labor in the service of their superior class, with a form of self-hate, generally accepted their status. Those who, through trade, industry and the banking system were now actually entering into the new "middle class" did not want their new status disturbed.

"Aristocracy is from below, its strength consists in the acceptance of, and even demand for, upper-class government by the mass of the governed," says Belloc, a product of that system. Most of Britain's proletariat had accepted the aristocratic system. Having had no power at all for centuries they were grateful for the few rights they now had. Mostly, the masses accepted their own role as the "great beast." The aristocratic system had made Britain, a small poor country, into the world's dominant power. "Patriotism — the Religion of the English" had been pounded into the minds of its masses with great force, generation after generation. When the poor revolted it was through crime, not from embracing a new system. Crime grew by the day. Some even saw it as a *legitimate* extension of "free enterprise."

But for optimum profits, "capitalism cannot carry on without restraint... under it the community [of laborers] must be subject to new, more stringent rules of conduct with public powers to enforce them...in such a society there will always be a considerable margin of destitution."<sup>8</sup> Therefore while "freedom of enterprise" was the core of capitalism, its success depended upon keeping labor under stringent laws and controls, which ensured that it accepted its "margin of destitution." Enforcement of fierce laws against the destitute had also to keep the masses on the brink of destitution, says Belloc. "The most important step was the formation in 1829 of the Metropolitan Police" like Turkish *sipahies*.

"If men are to be made to work for the profit of others they must do so under the fear of some penalty following such refusal. A slave can be coerced, but a free man can be only indirectly coerced by the threat of starvation. But there is no such danger or threat [of starvation] if he knows that, in any case, the community will support him or make up deficiencies in what he receives".<sup>9</sup> The new Poor Law of 1834 did away with almsgiving; and begging now carried with it the sentence of death at the third offence.

Britain's agricultural production was declining sharply; food imports from the colonies were much cheaper for the big companies, the fall in wheat prices sealed the fate of many British farmers, and along with the potato famine in Ireland (which some would later claim was *deliberately* engineered by England), an even larger flood of workers had descended upon the new industrial towns and into London, while many millions of peasants (especially the Irish) migrated to the United States.

In Britain (and soon in the US and other countries as they became industrialized), there was now no family security and no community support for the farm hand, male or female, and shift to towns accelerated. "On these two principles (1) the destruction of the family and (2) imprisonment for those of the proletariat who did not work — the English Poor Law of 1834 was founded."<sup>10</sup> The Poor House and the Debtors Prisons provided gruesome conditions, which social writers were later to compare to animal barns. Crime and corruption in all forms prevailed, prostitution (voluntary and coerced) was rampant everywhere. According to *The London Encyclopedia* (Winereb & Hibbert, London 1983), *there were some 12,000 actual schools teaching robbing and pick-pocketing, in London alone, many with their own uniforms!* Horace Walpole once said "one was forced to travel even at noon as if one was going into battle." Henry Fielding said the crime epidemic was due to gin and notorious "rookeries"; his brother John had an ethnic explanation: "There are certainly a much greater number of Jews and Irish than can possibly gain subsistence by honest means."

Prostitution in this "puritanical" Victorian era was rampant, not just in the Cockney East End, but central London, in Haymarket, Leicester Square and Soho. "In 1857, it was estimated that one house in 60 was a brothel and one woman in every 16 was a whore. The *Lancet* estimated that London had 6,000 brothels and about 80,000 prostitutes. Child prostitution was commonplace, partly because it was generally supposed that the act of deflowering [a virgin] could cure venereal disease,"<sup>11</sup> says the *London Encyclopedia* (italics added). Many sources confirm that there were many more girls than ever who augmented their meager wages with part-time prostitution.

Hygiene had remained primitive. The Great Plague had led to some changes but diseases were endemic. In 1845 the Metropolitan Board of Workers (precursor of London County Council) worked on ways to clear filth. "London's drainage had always been rudimentary, chaotic and chronic danger to health... before the Great Fire rubbish and excrement lay rotting and stinking in the gullies running down the middle of the cobbled streets from where it was occasionally washed away by heavy rainfalls... Cesspits were dug everywhere under the houses... nightsoil... could be carted away again to the market gardens and fields as manure... as late as the mid-19th century... most of London stood above an underground of excavated cesspits and many of the parish sewers were stagnant cesspools... Pepsy in his *Diary* records how his wife stooped in the street 'to do her business' and another entry reads 'Going down into my cellar... I put my foot on a great heap of finds'... In 1841 the census revealed that over 270,000 houses stood in the metropolis, most of which had a cesspit below."<sup>12</sup> (*London Encyclopedia*, p.139, italics added). Now a new law closed cesspits and all sewage went into the Thames, and the filth was so enormous, soon there were no live fish. The summer of 1858 became known as the summer of the "Great Stink", when curtains at the Houses of Parliament were soaked in chloride of lime, to mitigate the disgusting smell, reported Victorian Prof. Draper.

From the purely economic standpoint, however, the Industrial Age ensured that workers, knowing the consequences of destitution and of debt, worked as much as they were ordered to do and did everything they could to live within whatever pittance they earned as wages. The British industrialists only worry was the growing industrial capacity needed more and more raw material and more and more customers. The colonies already conquered provided enormous wealth but more foreign conquests would be nice, "for God and Country" especially distant lands rich in raw material and with at least a small portion of its population wealthy enough to be made customers of finished British goods.

## (2)

In the midst of it all, Charles Darwin dropped a bombshell. In *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*, Darwin claimed in effect that the Biblical (Genesis) account of human origins on earth could not be true, that humans evolved from lesser organisms and creatures, that this evolution was through an innate thirst to survive; ergo, "the survival of the fittest" was a natural phenomenon of life on earth.

While the Church generally denounced the new evolution theory, there was growing support for the Darwinian claims among academics and gradually among the educated segments of the population. As skepticism replaced the old simple faith in the Bible, especially in England, there was an important, *unspoken* reaffirmation of the political and social policies of Aristocratic England. *The survival of the fittest* confirmed the idea that the powerful were biologically driven to rule to their own best advantage over the weak, even if they used chicanery and duplicity to achieve their dominance, the colonialists were superior. The idea prevailed in Britain, even in the US. An American Christian priest, Josiah Strong, openly claimed Anglo-Saxon superiority in a best-selling book *Our Country*.<sup>13</sup> "Britons and Americans, it was argued, shared unique racial characteristics of intelligence and industry that made them better than other peoples... Imperialism was considered not just a law of society but a law of nature."<sup>14</sup>

Of course the fact that most Americans were, by now, not even of vague or mixed British ancestry did not seem to bother anyone. Moral obligations also seemed less important now than ever before, with religion and after-life, Heaven and Hell, in serious doubt. But alongside these growing doubts and agnosticism, there was strong Christian faith as well. Businessmen saw great profit-making potential for industries and trade, for marketers and retailers. The day institutionalized some fifteen hundred years ago as the day Jesus Christ was born, was now to be made a worldwide phenomenon.

Scholars would later argue that research showed Jesus was born in the Spring and 4-6 years before what is now Year One of Anno Domini (A.D.) of the new Christian calendar. Some have argued that in 354 A.D. Bishop Liberius in Rome chose December 25 as Jesus' birthdate as this date was celebrated for centuries as the birthdate of Mithra (or Mithras), the ancient Persian prophet, who

still had a huge European following and Emperor Constantine had chosen Christianity over Mithraism for Europe in his alliance with Rome. But there were pagan celebrations tied to that date too. Winter Solstice (shortest day of the year) was already a week of traditional pagan celebration in the pre-Christian era among the Northern Europeans; "Yule" (as in Yule log) was an Old Norse word for another pagan twelve-day celebration; an ancient pagan Roman rite (Saturnalia) was also a twelve-day celebration. From this came "the twelve days of Christmas."

The use of these pagan rites with Jesus' birth was relatively innocuous. Many religions clung to old pagan rites marginally. But one pagan rite now outdid all others in Christianity. This was the Christmas Tree. Vikings and Teutons in pre-Christian days had also considered this tree and the mistletoe sacred, as had the Druids. But the Christmas Tree emerged from Germany as the ultimate symbol of Christianity after Queen Victoria's married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. Anglophiles in the US copied it and the first Christmas Tree was displayed in 1854 by US President Pierce.

A Saint Nicolas (born in Turkey in the early years of Christianity, disallowed sainthood by Rome) had become popular in the Netherlands. In the nineteenth century, some Dutch migrants had brought his veneration to the US and his birth (said to be December 6) was celebrated. Then Washington Irving wrote a story about a pipe-smoking Dutchman who flew over trees, and a cartoonist Thomas Nast drew a cartoon of a mythical character with a flowing beard, this figure became associated over time with the Dutch St. Nicolas (mispronounced as "Santa Claus"). Then, to the delight of marketers, there was a sweet tale, "Christmas Carol", written by Charles Dickens, in which Scrooge is not only very stingy but gives no charity or presents at Christmas. Scrooge soon became the retailer's symbol of villainy at Christmas, not Herod. Non-Christians and Christians now saw the huge market potential of this phenomenon.

Christmas had not been a popular celebration among Protestants though no doubt the more devout Catholics attended mass on the day institutionalized as the day Jesus Christ was born. "In the seventeenth century, this holiday, was widely regarded in New England as an unappealing Popish plot. The leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony so disdained Christmas that in 1659 they passed a law against celebrating the holiday, punishing 'anybody who is found observing [it], by abstinence from labor, feasting or any other way.'<sup>15</sup>

But in the late 19th century the Christmas Tree, the Mistletoe, Santa Claus and fears of being called Scrooge all came together in business minds as marvelous tools to boost sales in the winter. The promotion was reportedly used first by retailers (Montgomery-Ward reportedly being the first) and then by manufacturers, first in the US and then in all over the world. Children were allowed to think Santa Claus was real, that he lived with his wife and elves and reindeers at the North Pole and came out distributing presents all around the world on Christmas Eve. Concentrated advertising pressure ensured that giving as many presents as possible kept one from being associated with the awful Scrooge. Christians "gave" till it hurt. Soon non-Christians felt obligated to "give" as well. King Herod who, many



believed, had sought to have the infant Jesus killed at birth, was no longer the main villain associated with Christ's birth. Now the villain was *Serooge*, from Dickens' fable, who did not believe in giving presents at Christmas. As far as is known, *no serious research was ever been conducted to determine if, when children grew older and discovered that Santa Claus was a myth, at least unconsciously decided that God, too, must be a myth.*

Certainly Darwinism helped to raise doubts about the Bible, *the only religious source to most in the West.* Coincidentally, there were two other critical sociological phenomena that emerged towards the end of the 19th century which cast doubt upon Christianity. Sigmund Freud, a Jewish-Austrian, was now gaining worldwide prominence with his controversial views on the human mind and the working of the unconscious. One of Freud's contentions that gained considerable support quickly was his claim that guilt was responsible for much *unnecessary* human suffering. A mind freed of guilt was a healthy mind. Directly and indirectly, the milieu provided reinforcement to the belief that pursuing one's own *selfish* interest, free of guilt, was healthy and perfectly in keeping with the human's *animal* nature, *as individuals and as groups, i.e., as a class within a society and as a country against another country.* Selfishness, then, was harmful *mostly* if guilt was associated with it. After all, *had not Darwin proved to the world that "survival of the fittest" was an evolutionary necessity?* Those who enjoyed privileges under the aristocratic system of government, agreed.

The French revolution, however, impressed itself upon the English masses to a degree, so there was greater awakening among the masses of their rights as humans. But then, in 1847, Karl Marx, a Jewish intellectual born in Germany, now residing in England, had published, with Engel, *Das Kapital*: Marxist philosophy called upon the workers of the world to unite, because *they* were the creators of wealth, not their feudal overlords. In France, the concept was deep enough to lead to another revolution, resulting in the overthrow of the Bourbon king placed upon the throne by foreign powers after they had crushed Napoleon. After a second revolt of the masses, and yet another massacre, the second French Republic was set up with Napoleon's grand-nephew Louis Napoleon as President (later Emperor). The socialist revolution had spread by now also to Italy, Austria and Hungary, but soon the Franco-German war led to France's defeat and devastation of its economy. A Third Republic was set up in France, this one with socialistic leanings, but *more "central" views, more firmly committed to foreign policy in keeping with colonial aspirations.*

In Germany, the birthplace of Marx, his influence grew rapidly, causing Chancellor Bismarck to seek to subtly suppress it, by "stealing the socialist thunder" with some reforms, such as state insurance against illnesses and even old age pension. But it was in Russia, where the brutal suppression of the masses had become a tradition from the time of Tsar Ivan ("The Terrible") that Marxist influence steadily grew. The Russian monarchs, all seeking foreign conquests in the name of Christian piety (from Ivan "The Terrible" and Peter "The Great" to Catherine "The Great" among others) had simultaneously brutalized and suppressed every uprising

of the starving masses with the sword and public hanging of suspected ringleaders. At the end of the 19th century, Tsar Nicholas, a cousin monarch of the Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany and Edward VII of Britain, saw no reason to depart from the "traditional" attitude towards the masses. But this time, corruption at court and in government had reached such a level as to draw not just the poor masses into the opposition, but intellectuals, *even some of the aristocracy.* And that was, eventually, to make a difference.

There had been minor disturbances even in Britain, influenced from the French mass movements, even before Marx. In order not to be accused of being unpatriotic, however, the British rebels argued with slogans: "Remove the bugs [the bloodsuckers], not the bedpost [the national structure]." Church and State, it must be remembered were one, with the monarch as head of both. Therefore, church "morality" could not interfere with state "diplomacy", "patriotism" was not just a secular duty, but a religious one too. So most revolts were easily suppressed. For some time, intellectuals in Britain had fought, as in other parts of Europe, for some concessions for the poor, the sick, the old. In 1847 under growing pressures of the labor movement, working hours for children and women were reduced to ten hours a day. In 1876, men (*only property-owning men*) were given the right to vote. Gradually, voting privileges to men (*only men*) were extended even to men who rented. Income tax had been introduced now to attend to a gradual increase in social services. Pressures for social reform were intensifying from some literary figures. In the world of English literature, not only had great talent emerged, but great thought and ideologies as well.

## (3)

Away from the colonial adventures, the industries, and growing frustration of the masses, there had begun, with education and prosperity, a new higher level in *cultural consciousness.* There had been a remarkable explosion of art all over Europe, with France leading the rest. Great talents had emerged in all countries of Europe, however, alongside the perennial debate about what art is — in all its forms and manifestations. Should Art *always* have an *overt*, moral message or could it be a sincere expression of life without a *conscious* message? With the great Greek philosophers as the savants, the classical norms of Plato and Aristotle had been accepted, but rebellious "romantic" talent had moved in their own direction. The transition from religious art (in fine arts, theater, music) under Church direction to art in all its free forms was emerging amidst great controversy and extremism.

In Britain, with growing literacy and education, the written word soon dominated. Literature was governed not by the yardstick of reaching the "best-seller" list (as it was to be in the second half of the 20th century everywhere) but by its quality. Publishers and authors did not expect to become very rich through their work, but they could become highly *respected* for its quality, provided it did not encroach upon cardinal rules set by the Church. One cardinal rule was that, in presenting history, the pioneering role of Muslims must *never* be acknowledged..

Aside from whitewashed history in this regard, Britain itself had set up admirable system of education into the classics. No longer was Europe dependent upon the Muslim experts of past centuries who had explored and resurrected Greek Thought, and pioneered studies into science and medicine. It is true that some of those Muslim books with authors' names *Europeanized*, were still used at Oxford, Cambridge, Sorbonne, but Europe had produced their own experts now. With economic prosperity great strides were being made in the sciences by Christians. Surgery in Europe was no longer the barbaric method of bleeding, application of leeches, severing of limbs by barbers who were part-time surgeons.

In one respect Europe had still not changed much. Exposure to the East had caused some interest in bathing; "Turkish baths" and "Turkish towels" were now prevalent, but bathing was still looked upon with suspicion by the majority. Even in the great mansions, the "stately homes", there was now a bathroom, but just one for many bedrooms per floor. Perhaps the old prejudice was at least unconsciously aided by the association of bathing with Muslims; in Spain of the Inquisition era, as we have seen, it was a test used to check if Muslims, forced to convert to Christianity, still bathed; if they did, were still Muslims and therefore deserved to be killed. Even after toilets were invented, the use of water was to be avoided with the use of paper eventually as "toilet paper". In the 1990s, with advanced techniques, it has been found that unsanitary tiny bits of faeces remain on the hands of those who rely on toilet paper. These then get transferred everywhere.

While great talents in Europe produced works of art in paintings, sculpture and music, it was through the written word that the perennial search for the meaning of art in the new age of literacy was pursued in Europe. Should art always have an overt moral message? Fascinating theories abounded. It was still an era in which the domain of art was very much the prerogative of *real* talent and *real* intelligence, as intensive image-making and promotion was still in its infancy, arguments were conducted on true merit among peers of talent and experience.

Plato still created reverberations among the intelligentsia even during the Renaissance with his contention that art was twice removed from reality. Art was still on the defensive in many parts of Europe, and theories thrived. Loginus had said Art was "a deathless longing for all that is great and more *divine* than ourselves", the artistic expression adding a sublime quality in this search. Dryden wanted poetry to instruct and delight. Ben Jonson asked for "decorum" as did other neo-classicists like Racine, le Boileau; Alexander Pope advocated that Nature should be "methodized." How does the use of one medium versus another affect art? Lessing said "Art has nothing to do with sequence in time and juxtaposition in space. Painter and poet express not the material detail of the practical world but their own single state of mind." The ancient Laocoon Group by an unknown artist now in the Sistine Chapel (of a priest being strangled, along with two little boys, by a serpent) could, in its sculptural form, best express the agony with veins of the priest's neck throbbing just *before* the final strangulation; the scream is almost a sigh here. In Virgil's poetic depiction of Laocoon, the priest cries out loud; he is not naked as in the sculpture, but clothed in priestly garb. The difference in treatment

was to extract the maximum impact in the medium used. *The medium was never the message.* But the medium dictated how the subject of art might best be treated.

The Romantics, who preceded the Victorian neo-classicism, saw *sincerity* in art *per se* as paramount, rather than a deliberate, conscious agenda, a message, which was secondary. John Keats was not willing to observe artificial boundaries: "Beauty is truth, truth beauty" he said, while to Coleridge "Nature is the art of God" and so, to him, the artist goes beyond the level of ordinary imagination of the real world to another level where the artist himself or herself dissolves, surrenders consciousness to recreate it in the final expression, outside of oneself (he took opium to aid this transition). Their views clashed with those who were considered the Christian proponents of art of the Victorian age. Ruskin felt Art must remain within the bounds of the *established* norms of Christianity. It was his considerable influence on Victorian architecture that contributed to what was called Christian Gothic. William Blake also insisted that Christianity *is* Art (including the explosions on canvas he himself created) but *not* vice versa.

None, however, disagreed with Wordsworth when he said, as Dante had moaned, that true Art is "elaborate and painful toil", from "thought, long and deep." Even the Romantics knew the importance of discipline in art.

That discipline did not always extend, unfortunately, to many writers of history and social issues. To most historians (and there were exceptions as we have noted) truth was important as long as one did not commit the awful blunder of finding fault with Government and Church directives. Therefore, one stayed committed, whether one was Christian or agnostic, to glorify Christianity and Christendom, and observed the old prejudices against Islam. In some ways, the problem for such writers was understandable. Even if they were to make an honest study of Islam, publish facts of past history, who would buy such books? And, was there not, always, the danger of Treason? Kipling, "the Laureate of the music hall" as detractors contemptuously called him, warned Britain that the bridge between the mysterious East it had colonized and the civilized West was much too great to be bridged. Conquer, by all means but don't take their thinking seriously.

Poets sung of England's past in glorious terms, as Shakespeare had done, none more so than Alfred Tennyson. In the future era of visual media, his fable "Idylls of the King" (about King Arthur and the Round Table) was actually to be treated as *fact* by future generations.

Towards the end of the 19th century, there were responsible writers in Britain and mainland Europe, who sought to correct past errors and past injustices, even towards Islam. Bernard Shaw said "The Medieval Ecclesiastes... painted Muhammadanism [sic] in the darkest colours. They were trained to hate the man Muhammad and his religion... I have studied him, the wonderful man, and my opinion, far from being anti-Christ, he must be called the saviour of humanity."<sup>16</sup>

Mostly, intellectuals concentrated on home conditions, to correct the terrible chasm between the conditions for the masses of the poor and the wealthy, seeking to improve the gruesome conditions of the British masses in highly prosperous Britain. Their criticism played a major role in the implementation of social reforms



which aristocratic England and the monied middle-class were forced to make. Charles Dickens drew particular attention to crime, the Poor Houses and the Debtor's Prisons. H.G. Wells wrote a more honest treatise about the world than was the norm. His amazing look into the future, his "science fiction", has proven to be remarkably accurate in its forecast. The Irish, struggling for independence, produced writers who, perhaps from their ethnic pains at the hand of the English government, wrote about injustices. Henrik Ibsen, the Norwegian playwright, precursor of feminism, wrote "A Doll's House" with a strong sociological message. George Bernard Shaw followed in the English drama with his scathing comments on social ills. The Webbs, husband and wife, formed the Fabians, a progressive society of intellectuals (to which Shaw also belonged) seeking social reforms and redress for the disenfranchised. A young American, Eleanor Roosevelt, met them with her husband, and was greatly impressed. She was to devote her own life in the US to the improvement of conditions for the disenfranchised, aroused hostility as a result among the newly-rich, in democratic USA.

Europe's intellectuals sought justice for the suffering masses, but with the very rare exception, avoided criticism of foreign policy. Perhaps from fear of being accused of being unpatriotic, or even with a vague belief in the Darwinian justification of self-survival, very few even tried to study international issues through unbiased accounts, and fewer still to risk the extreme dangers of directing their criticism against their own government's colonial injustices, their religious fanaticism, their prejudices. H.G. Wells did, in some fundamental ways. And, after a visit to the United States, like Charles Dickens and Kipling, he was very disappointed and critical in his writings of what he saw, despite the fact that he, like other British celebrities who visited, was adulated by the American multitudes wherever he went. He was particularly scathing in his criticism of the values of newly-rich Americans.

## (4)

By the end of the 19th century, American industrialists and their appointees in Washington decided the US must follow England's lead and colonize more. Foreign markets were needed for American products. It bought Alaska.

Corporate media was seeking every means to make windfall profits and had become the mainstay of US journalism, though there were the few ardent idealists who appealed to that segment of the populace that still clung to the nation's founding principles. But the monster newspapers owned by tycoons and their empires that crushed all others. The tycoons and the McKinley government were keen to join Europe in colonial practices, in Africa and Asia. And they interpreted the Monroe Doctrine to mean

(1) The US had a right to Colonize in the Americas,

(2) The Europeans did not.

Having bought Alaska to the north, the US eyed the naïve but the rich islands off Hawaii to the East, just as it moved its roving eyes into Mexico, Central and

South America. The US used Europe's Machiavellian tactics now in taking Hawaii. Christian missionaries went in to spread Christianity, but soon they took over valuable lands rich with produce and fruits, established themselves as friends, then as citizens in the eyes of the king, who naively granted more and more privileges. They soon set themselves up as the "loyal opposition" but, with the US Congress, secretly planned the acquisition of Hawaii especially Pearl Harbor that was enticing to the US military. The Hawaiian king died, conveniently, on a visit to the US, his sister, who became Queen, was even more trusting. When she finally realized the intent of the US, she made pathetic attempts to withstand US control. President Cleveland (the sole Democratic president in a long string of Republican rulers) is reported to have been sympathetic to Hawaii's plight and promised he would not allow its takeover by the US. But then he died, President McKinley an admirer of British colonialism, ordered the capture of Hawaii.

Now there were the Spanish interests to the west of the US. When opportunity presented itself, for instance, amidst considerable hysteria to crushing Spanish interests, major newspapers such as Hearst's *New York Morning Journal* spewed screaming headlines against the Spanish, "a lurid, unchecked and boldly splashed stories of atrocities in which the Spanish authorities appeared as 'butchers', rapists, torturing tyrants as infinitum"<sup>24</sup> writes Mr. Harry Hopkins (*The Numbers Game*). Alfred Pulitzer's *New York Herald*, an erstwhile competitor in what soon called "yellow journalism", felt called upon to join in "atrocities for atrocity, insult for insult, 'call for action' for 'call for action'" says Mr. Hopkins. When the US warship the *S.S. Maine*, sent to Cuban harbors, exploded there, the newspapers immediately accused the Spanish of having torpedoed it. The hysteria was deafening. The US declared war, won, annexed not only Puerto Rico but distant Philippine Islands as well. It took three years of fighting to convince the Filipinos that they needed to be civilized by the US, but it was done (in 1946 the Philippines regained their independence).

## (5)

This was still modest compared to what the European colonialists continued to achieve in their conquests of Asia and Africa. Germany had captured more French territories after the Franco-German War, and Bismarck now sought to improve relations with France by offering his good wishes to France's colonial aspirations elsewhere. "This was partly why he encouraged French colonial enterprise", argues Davis<sup>25</sup>. With Turkey thoroughly weakened, France competed with the British and Italy for colonies first in Northern Africa's Muslim lands; it had already conquered Algiers; in 1881 France fought Italy for Tunis, leading to bad feelings between them for thirty years. Then the French entered Morocco, causing Spain to feel unhappy; in 1891 the French had occupied Ivory Coast, Mahoney in 1892, Madagascar in 1895.

In some ways, Britain's amazing success in conquering and colonizing India had not only vastly enriched Britain. It had tempted other European powers of the

huge windfalls which were available through winning trust of local rulers in ancient cultures and colonizing them. If an ancient pillar of civilization like India could be conquered this way, other smaller lands could be very easily through winning trust. Britain's conquest had started with those early visits, such as that of the pirate Hawkins and ambassador Roe; the East India Company had been allowed by India to flourish as essentially a trading company, growing steadily through its multipurpose operations to spread its economic and political muscle across India and into the Far East. Using the same Machiavellian model it had in the Middle East, the rulers around India were encouraged in their desultory lifestyles, their hedonistic pursuits, naively accepting Britain's claims of friendship while they made generous concessions to the colonists until it was too late.

## (6)

In 1857, "India became entirely British." That is about all there is about Britain's conquest of India in British Headmaster H. A. Davies' *An Outline History of the World*. There was a lot more involved in Britain's conquest of India. The British had come as an innocent trading East India Company, used Indian rulers' naïveté to win their friendship, then colonized the vast sub-continent with riches several times greater than Britain's own humble natural resources. Not all segments of India's segments been docile and easy to subdue. There were insurrections by Indians, periodically, mowed down by British forces with superior firepower. A great many battles had to be fought against the fiery Pathans and the Afghans in the North. There had been the "Black Hole of Calcutta"<sup>26</sup> on the east coast of India; among the last to present a forceful opposition had been the Marathas in the West under Shivaji (who was later called "mountain-rat", "brigand", "thief" in British history books). Most of all, there was Tippu Sultan, ruler of Mysore, who had stood up to the British, won victories over them until, with the aid of Britain's skilful use of bribery on corrupt Indians, Tippu Sultan was defeated and killed.

The fact that Indian history was written by the British victors and, accepted as standard history even after India's independence in 1947 by most Indians is in no small measure due to the remarkable skills and respect with which the British had established themselves around the world as reliable historians. The British were skilled but not always honest historians. Some Indians have, periodically, challenged some British versions, even proven them false. But most such challenges have been raised in areas which could be considered self-serving for the authors and therefore carried less weight than they should have. But there are also glorious exceptions.

There has always been evidence that the British deliberately sought to "divide and conquer", i.e., incite hate between Hindus and Muslims; as most of India was under Muslim rule in recent centuries, the British incited Hindus by fabricated tales of Muslim brutality towards the Hindu population and with claims that the Muslims converted Hindus "at the point of the sword." So brazen did this British policy to "divide and conquer" become that there were written instructions passed on by

some British leaders to their appointees in India which still exist, such as the letter dated March 3, 1862<sup>27</sup> from Secretary of State Wood to Lord Elgin which said in part: "We have maintained our power in India by playing off one part against the other and we must continue to do so. *Do what you can, therefore, to prevent all having a common feeling.*" Then there is Secretary of State George Francis Hamilton's letter dated 26 March 1888 to Lord Curzon, which says (in part) how hostility between educated Indians could be fostered in the future: "If we can break educated Indians into two sections holding widely different views, we should, by such division, strengthen our position against the subtle and continuous attack which the spread of education must make upon our system of Government. *We should so plan the education text-books that the difference between community and community are further strengthened.*"<sup>28</sup> In a letter dated 14 January 1887, Governor-General Dufferin was instructed to ensure that the education of Indians should be so planned as to create hostility between Hindus and Muslims: "*This division of religious feeling is greatly to our advantage and I look for some good [sic] as a result of your Committee of Enquiry on Indian Education and on teaching material.*"<sup>29</sup>

Some unique Hindu intellectuals were to devote years to research and prove some of the deliberate falsehoods instilled by British "history" against Muslim rulers. We might consider, for brevity, an example or two about two prime targets of Britain's smear campaign, Emperor Aurangzeb and Tippu Sultan, ruler of Mysore and quote some findings of just three eminent Hindu scholars who proved the falsity of British "history" at least in this regard.

In a series of lectures in 1985, B.N. Pande, recognized Hindu scholar, historian, Governor of Orissa (in the Indira Gandhi era), said "Indian history books were so falsified and distorted as to give an impression that the medieval period of Indian history was full of atrocities committed by Muslim rulers on their Hindu subjects and [that] the Hindus had to suffer terrible indignities under Muslim rule."<sup>30</sup> Governor Pande then provides evidence through several examples to prove the falsehood which many educated Indians have come to believe. Space does not permit many of these examples to be covered here, so let us consider just one: Governor Pande was doing some research once when he was approached by members of the Anglo-Bengali College Students Union with their history text book written by an *Indian* teacher Dr. Hari Prasad Shastri, Head of Sanskrit, Calcutta University which said "Three thousand Brahmins [devout Hindus] committed suicide as Tippu [Sultan, ruler of Mysore] wanted to convert them forcibly to Islam." Governor Pande wrote to Dr. Shastri, asking for his source. "After many reminders came the reply that he had taken it from the *Mysore Gazetteer*." Governor Pande searched but could find no copies of that *Gazetteer*. He wrote to Sir Brijendra Nath Seal, Vice-Chancellor of Mysore University who forwarded the letter to Prof. Srikanta who was editing a new edition of the *Mysore Gazetteer*. Prof. Srikanta informed Governor Pande that there was no such report of 3000 Brahmins committing suicide in any *Mysore Gazetteer*, and went on to inform him that in fact "the Prime Minister of Tippu Sultan was a Brahmin named Purnea and his Commander-in-Chief was also a Brahmin named Krishna



Rao, He [Prof. Srikanta] supplied me with a list of 156 temples to which Tippu Sultan used to pay annual grants" says Governor Pande and provided photostats of evidence of Tippu Sultan's close relations with Hindu religious leaders.<sup>30</sup> Governor Pande adds: "Prof. Srikanta suggested that Dr. Shastri might have based his narrations on the so-called *History of Mysore* by Col. Miles who claimed to have translated his *History of Tippu Sultan* from a Persian manuscript which was said to be in the personal library of Queen Victoria. On investigation it was found that *there was no such manuscript in the library of Queen Victoria*; most of the 'facts' in Col. Miles' history book were concocted and false," Gov. Pande sent all this evidence to various education institutions who had been misled in the past. He was assured that corrections would be made. "However, I was amazed to find the same 'suicide' story [of the 3000 Brahmins] was still existing in the history text-books which have been prescribed for Junior High Schools in U.P. [Indian State] for the students of standard VI, VII, and VIII classes in 1972" Governor Pande adds.<sup>31</sup>

Several other scholars provide more examples of historical distortions of Mogul emperors in British-inspired history, in particular about Aurangzeb. Several scholars quote from documents they have examined but they are mainly Muslim scholars and in keeping with the pledge by this writer not to quote any Muslims sources throughout, they will not be quoted here. Governor Pande (who is Hindu) himself conducted considerable research. He admits to being surprised himself (having been educated through British texts himself) at the amount of donations and "jagirs" made by Aurangzeb to Hindu temples, which he came across accidentally when he presided over a dispute in Allahabad as Chairman of the Municipality in 1948-53; he also found *firman*s (official proclamations) came up showing Aurangzeb made donations and granted rights to Hindu temples. "I was wondering how Aurangzeb who was known [in history books] for the demolition of temples, could confer a *jagir* on a temple with the words 'the *jagir* was being conferred for the *puja* and *bhog* of the deity?'" I felt sure that the documents were not genuine" he says but then had them examined by experts and found them authentic. On further research, he also found that there were a great many such donations and grants of *jagirs* by Aurangzeb to Hindu temples. "It was a new image of Aurangzeb which appeared before me. I was very much surprised." He found more and more *Firman*s issued from 1659 and 1685 AD. Governor Pande believes the vilifiers of Aurangzeb have fully used one instance known as the Benaras *Firman*. Governor Pande goes into details of why this particular action was taken and adds "Without realizing the real import of the *firman* they accuse Aurangzeb of banning the construction of Hindu temples."<sup>32</sup> However Aurangzeb did order the demolition of Vishwanath temple at Varanasi, says the Governor. This was when he was on a trip with many Hindu rajas (nobles) and their wives. One *Rani* (Hindu lady) went to pray at the temple with other women but she was then missing. The search party discovered that there was a secret basement behind a statue where she had been taken and raped. "The rajas demanded exemplary action. Aurangzeb ordered that as the sacred precincts had been despoiled, Lord Vishwanath [the statue of the deity] may be moved to some other place, the temple

be razed to the ground and the Mahant [man guilty of the rape] be arrested and punished."<sup>33</sup> These facts he says have been confirmed by other researchers, e.g., Dr. Siarmayya in his book *The Feathers and the Stones* and Dr. P.L. Gupta, former Curator of Patna Museum. What is seldom mentioned in these history books is that Aurangzeb once also ordered the demolition of a *mosque*, the Jama Masjid at Golkunda. The reason was that the local ruler had stolen a fortune in revenues, buried it and built a mosque over the site. Aurangzeb ordered the mosque be demolished and the public money recovered.

In *Young India*, dated Jan 23, 1930, edited by Mahatma Gandhi, his editorial says "Fatehali Tippu Sultan of Mysore is represented by foreign historians as a fanatic who oppressed the Hindu subjects had converted them to Islam by force. But he was nothing of the kind...his relations with his Hindu subjects were of a perfectly cordial nature. The Archeological Dept of Mysore State is in possession of over thirty letters written by Tippu to Shankaracharya of Shringeri Math (Hindu holy man)" which show high mutual respect between them. One letter from Tippu, the editorial adds "deserves to be printed in letters of gold in every history of India...Tippu made lavish gifts of land and other things to Hindu temples."<sup>34</sup>

An example of the superior Indian character which, tragically, is found far less in these days, is scholar-lawyer, Mr. Bhagwan Gidwani, a Hindu born in Sind (now Pakistan), son of the local Congress President. He had an outstanding scholastic record, and became a specialist lawyer for India at The World Court. By the standards of our times, one would never expect someone uprooted from his home, no doubt with great suffering as so many millions of refugees were in the India-Pakistan partition, to correct the ugly image of a Muslim ruler, certainly not spend thirteen years in assiduous research on such research. But this is precisely what the remarkable Mr. Gidwani did and then wrote *The Sword of Tippu Sultan*.<sup>35</sup>

He tells us how it all began: "A conviction was also growing in me that ever since the English commentators of the 18th century had developed their portrait of Tippu Sultan as an arch-villain, no one had attempted a fair portrayal of the events of his life and the general shape of his character. Even some of the subsequent writers had been content to accept the many distortions passed on to them by those commentators... Often, I have wondered why Indian authors have failed to come forward to correct the many distortions and contradictions planted in our history books by hostile, motivated or misguided commentators."<sup>36</sup> As he proceeded on his own painstaking researches he understood why. It took him 13 years of hard work, in research, tracing original documents, at various archives, libraries and Records Offices around India, then in Britain, in France, obtaining copies of English, French, Portuguese, Dutch, Ottoman, and Iranian documents. "I do believe that the past has a remarkable tendency to extend itself into the present and at times, when we forget the past, we run the risk of building without foundations and cutting off the roots of national growth...He [Tippu] knew that the land he loved was in danger of dying an unnatural death — from assassination by the enemy within us...I am convinced that lesson is as valid today as it was in Tippu's times."<sup>37</sup> writes the astute Mr. Gidwani

Tippu Sultan, he tells us, was named after a Muslim saint, but had two tutors, a Muslim Maulwi Obedullah and a Hindu Goverdhan Pandit, as his father Hyder Ali, then the ruler of Mysore, wished him to learn about both doctrines. According to Gidwani, Tippu Sultan was deeply spiritual by nature, a voracious reader with a library of books from around the world, who had to take the mantle of ruler and was subsequently forced to become a warrior, because his older brother, groomed for that role, was incapacitated. Tippu is reported to have been a very fair and loving family man, with devoted Hindu and Muslim lieutenants — in fact those who were bought by the British to subvert him during the Anglo-Mysore Wars were two Muslims, one his employee and the other, he says, the Nizam of Hyderabad. Tippu won his battles against the British when others (except the Marathas) were losing theirs. Each time the British were about to lose, they called for a truce knowing by now that Muslims are directed by the Qur'an to accept offers of truce from "the people of the book". Tippu Sultan (following the Qur'anic directive *literally* and with his personal dislike for wars) allowed a truce each time. Like the Crusaders did in the Middle East, the British used such a truce to regroup and attack him again.

Tippu Sultan's love for his country's independence and for that of others from conquests and injustice is reflected in his identification with the American War of Independence and the French Revolution. He was very impressed with the American Declaration of Independence and the France's Rights of Man. *He sent a large sum of money for the newly-freed Americans to Benjamin Franklin, US Ambassador in Paris.* He sent the money through "the Reverend Christian Frederick Schwartz who discovered in himself a natural talent for intrigue, diplomacy and spying...that these activities paid far more than the religious devotion."<sup>38</sup> *The priest kept the money for himself, forged Franklin's signature in a note to Tippu Sultan thanking him for his generosity and asked for more money! The swindle was, however, later discovered.*

From diaries written and many other records of Tippu Sultan's era, Gidwani presents an entirely different account from that of British historians. Gidwani uses the narrative form to present the facts he has researched but he also provides evidence of extraordinary brutality, murders and rapes conducted by British forces regularly at every victory they celebrated (he also provides proof from "published English records" in one instance, of atrocities conducted "upon four hundred beautiful women already bleeding with wounds from bayonets").<sup>39</sup> After the Anantpur massacre, a sobbing Tippu Sultan is reported to have exclaimed "Is there no God in heaven to forbid such revolting cruelties?"<sup>40</sup> British Governor-General Warren Hastings, utterly corrupt and obsessively cruel, was later to face "impeachment proceedings by the British Parliament for his untold cruelties and degradations and for having amassed a vast personal fortune."<sup>41</sup> His successor Lord Charles Cornwallis (who had led the defeated British forces in America) was more humane. Tippu himself won respect and friendship from the few French officers, says Gidwani, who came to *help* him against the British, such as the French Sergeant Jean Baptiste Jules Bernadotte who later became King Charles

XIV of Sweden. Gidwani says that the subsequent hostilities with the Marathas, the Nizam of Hyderabad, the "Balam family", were all incited by the British, as part of Hastings' strategy, and that Tippu Sultan knew this and once said: "*May God give us the wisdom to perceive who our true enemies are. Surely, the Marathas are not. They share this land with us as part of their birthright.*"<sup>42</sup>

In a letter to the Governor of Malabar, Tippu Sultan wrote that he was "pained" to find that women there were usually naked from the waist up. Was this from purity, he asked? When told that it was a local custom, Tippu Sultan wrote "Do custom of this tribe impose any corresponding 'disability' on men also? If not, such a disability on women alone is contrary to principles of justice and is therefore discriminatory."<sup>43</sup>

The British succeeded in duping other Indian leaders to hostility towards Tippu Sultan with stories they concocted, which led to skirmishes between the Indians. Tippu Sultan's closest Hindu advisors, among them his Prime Minister Purniya (also his father Hyder Ali's close friend and advisor) and his secretary Brahmin Shivji were less forgiving of fellow-Indians who were seduced by the British into hostilities against Tippu Sultan. His secretary Shivji had deep scars from his own loss, when his three small children were kidnapped, apparently through "the Englishman, Father Wilson, a missionary." Shivji had been nearly beaten to death when he tried to recover them.<sup>44</sup> When Tippu Sultan was finally killed in battle against the British, Gidwani reports that the new Governor-General Richard Wellesley (Earl of Mornington) announced Tippu's death at a dinner banquet with a toast: "Ladies and gentlemen, I drink to the corpse of India."<sup>45</sup> It took several decades, however, for that "corpse" to breathe its last. In 1856, the last Mogul Emperor, the aging Emperor Bahadur Shah, another foolish trusting man, a talented poet (who wrote under the name of Zafar) suddenly awoke from his chess board (a game to which he was highly addicted) to find the shackles engulfed him and the Indian sub-continent. The last phase of India's tragedy had started when there was a revolt by the Indian forces now under British command. Hindus revere the cow and eat no beef. Muslims are forbidden to eat the flesh of pigs. But British masters reportedly gave their Hindu soldiers beef to eat and the Muslims pork. It was the last straw for the Indians. They revolted, Indians across the country rioted, the Mogul Emperor attempted to rise at this eleventh hour despite the impossible odds. Some Indian ethnics, knowing Indians could not win, sided with the British forces. The Indians were trounced, Emperor Bahadur Shah was taken prisoner and sent to a prison in Rangoon, Burma, where he would spend the remainder of his life writing heart-rending verses about his own foolishness in accepting the enemy as friend. Several decades later, Subhas Chandra Bose, an Indian freedom fighter, (reportedly sympathetic to the Axis powers during WW2) would visit Bahadur Shah's grave and cry, says Gidwani, and promise the departed Emperor that India would one day be free...

But that was in the future. In 1857, after Bahadur Shah was taken prisoner, the British announced that India was a dominion of the British Empire and Queen



Victoria was now the Empress of India. And historians, such as Headmaster Davis, summed it all up in one sentence: "India became entirely British."

## ( 7 )

Britain had proceeded with new conquests in "Darkest Africa", taking Natal and the Transvaal, as well as the Orange River Colony after the Boer War of 1899-1902, when it defeated the Dutch Boers (who had earlier conquered the area, with the religious rationale that it was the "New Jerusalem"). They set up the Union of South Africa, a "dominion" like Canada. By the end of the 19th century, Britain had also conquered the Gold Coast, Uganda, Zanzibar, and Nyasland, most of East Africa and the prized rich territory of Rhodesia.

African conquests outside of Arab North Africa had been relatively easy for Britain and the other colonists. They had, by now, the wealth, the military power and battle experience far in advance of the trusting and naive natives. The British had no problems with recruitment. Their forces, consisting of British poor and native forces faced considerable dangers of diseases and wild life in these African conquests. The British fed, clothed and paid a wage, so they lived better than they ever had before. For the colonialists it was all a matter of selecting the areas with the best potential for raw material and rich minerals. Setting up rail links were among the first priorities for transport. The British *did* provide the foundations of upgrading modern comforts in the areas they colonized (that was essential in order to exploit the natural riches in the lands). They announced the good news to the Western World that another territory had been added for the spread of Christianity.

Most of the missionaries (and there were a veritable army by now, sent to the various colonies), were no doubt devout Christians themselves, but in their jobs overseas they worked in the interests of "King/Queen and Country." There were some remarkable exceptions who were genuine servants of Christ who devoted their lives to improving the lot of the natives in the new colonized land, setting up schools and medical care. Many missionaries lost their lives.

In northern (Arab) Africa, it was harder but Britain prevailed. By 1883 Britain had occupied Egypt, conquered Sudan; the French sought to take their share of the spoils there but the British kept them away.

Impressed with conquests of other Europeans in Africa and feeling left out, Belgium, recently independent, jumped in too, and took a large part of the heartland in 1876 that was dubbed the Belgium Congo. Brutal treatment of African labor by the Belgians was periodically reported, which must have been extreme, as such brutal treatment of local labor by the colonialists was common. Now Germany found the temptation too great to resist. Germany's Chancellor Bismarck had once announced that "We do not wish to colonize nor can we do so. We shall never possess a fleet. Nor are our workmen, our lawyers, our retired soldiers worth anything for colonization." But in 1884 Germany found the temptation irresistible and entered the colonial race. By 1890 it had taken Togoland, the Cameroons, what became German West Africa and German East Africa respectively,

By the time the appetite of the colonialists was sated, there was just one country in Africa which had not been conquered or made a "protectorate". It was Liberia, set up by former American slaves with US aid and with Christian ties to the US. The other was Abyssinia (now Ethiopia), the oldest Christian country in the world.<sup>46</sup> It seemed Abyssinia's Christian heritage really meant *something* to the colonialists but in early 1930s Italy invaded. Henry Luce (son of Christian missionaries and self-proclaimed ardent Christian) who took control of *Time* magazine after the death of its founder Britten Hadden, rejoiced with Italy and called Mussolini "the outstanding national, moral leader today". He poked fun at Abyssinia's "mudwallowing savages", its women "tallowed with Ethiopian grease", among other things.<sup>47</sup>

## ( 8 )

In the Far East, Britain, Germany, France and Russia had been competing and were soon joined not only by the United States but also by Japan. Japan had decided that if any colonizing was to come in Asia, Japan should have the same rights as the Europeans and Americans. Ironically after Commodore Perry had forced Japan at gunpoint into opening its markets for the West, Japan emerged as an exporter, a major industrial power, a serious competitor with the West. Like Britain, Japan was very short of raw material it needed for its production. After Britain had conquered Australia and New Zealand (the new homes for its convicts as the US, its previous depository for convicts, was now independent) and made the islands in the Pacific, including the rubber-rich Malay Peninsula into its "protectorate", all eyes were on that mighty ancient civilization of China.

China had rejected all attempts by Europeans to gain entry. Many centuries ago, China had been courteous to Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius's representative, as the philosophy he expounded seemed to be in agreement with that of the Chinese ancient philosopher Confucius. China had invented gunpowder, and with its enormous might in past centuries, could easily have invaded and conquered much of the Western world. But it *did not believe in conquests or in the military use of gunpowder*. It had sent travelers to the advanced world (which it saw at the time as extending no farther West than Mecca) the objective of its foreign travelers was to see and learn, not conquer. Trade had been established with the Middle East and India.

Then, towards the end of the 13th century, the Polo family (father, son, uncle) of Venice reported they had just returned from China where Marco Polo had become the favorite of the ruler Kubla Khan. They had kept journals, they said, and their subsequent book did *not* arouse as much enthusiasm then as it would two centuries later. The main reason for this disinterest among his contemporaries, was he was known to lie and exaggerate and they were convinced he was lying now, as some of his tales did not coincide with facts. But in the late 15th century the Polo journal excited adventurers like Columbus and Vasco da Gama. After getting reports of Western fierce military objectives and conquests,

their massacres in the New World, the piracy at sea, China's suspicions were further aroused with the type of European "visitors", the "buccaneers" who kept arriving from Europe in the following century. It received these English and Dutch "traders" coldly, noted how they made inroads into India and Persia. Then colonialists came in large numbers, used force and obtained access to Canton. Faced with more belligerence from the fiercely militant colonial warships, China allowed Shanghai and Tiensin to be opened by this "gunboat diplomacy", even made concessions in trade to avoid bloodshed. From the start Chinese comments about the Europeans (later translated from the Chinese by Europeans) were contemptuous. To the Chinese, these Westerners were "barbarians, ugly, unclean, ruthless, made friends with others only to conquer; they were deceitful, liars, without any culture" (as reported verbatim by the BBC World Service, September 1994).

Now Britain, whose motto in colonial conquests was evidently "Anything Goes", decided that if the Chinese populace were made addicts of opium which some reportedly took socially, in moderation, conquest would be easy. Initial attempts to bring large amounts of opium to the Chinese population of cities like Shanghai caused the Chinese government to react furiously and ban all import and trade in opium. So, just as the Portuguese had done in Goa (India), Britain, by now domineering in India, had the opium poppy grown in India, then smuggled opium into China, inside the bales of cotton in which India and China had traded in for centuries. BBC documentary on China in September 1994 admitted this, though most Western history books glide past it. Even some literary writers often admit it in passing. Benny Green, referring to the appointment of Ernest Wodehouse to Hong Kong, writes (in *P.G. Wodehouse*, The Rutledge Press, in New York 1981) "The colony had been acquired by the British in 1841, with the purpose of expediting the dispatch of opium to China."<sup>18</sup>

The invasion of China by the colonialists, when it came, was therefore easy. China's opium addiction had taken hold so thoroughly that there was little resistance. Initially, the colonialists (the British, French, Russian, and Germans with the late-entry Americans) including many Christian missionaries, ruled in great affluence and in princely style. But there was enough vitality left in a Chinese rebellion against this takeover, and the colonialists and their Christian missionaries were expelled in what came to be known in Western history books as the Boxer Rebellion of 1900.

The colonialists had by now moved beyond Asian mainland and into conquests of South Eastern islands. Here they could be even more ruthless in the subjugation of local "coolie" population and set up the plantations, which provided rich rewards. "At the beginning of the nineteenth century it was still taken for granted that 'every colony does or ought to exist for the benefit of the Mother-country' as H.W. Muntinghe wrote in an advice to Lieutenant-Governor Raffles in 1813"<sup>19</sup> writes Jan Breman in *Taming of the Coolie Beast*. Islam had come to the area several centuries earlier and was by now the most prevalent religion, so the conquest by the colonizers took on a crusading justification. Indonesia's rubber (in Sumatra)

attracted Dutch colonization, just as Malaysia rich spice trade had drawn the British to colonize it through its East India Company decades earlier, and by 1888 to gain control of Brunei and then, in partnership with the Dutch, all of Borneo.

Brooshoff was reportedly the first to write in 1901 (in *Colonial Politics*) of "the wretched life led by the coolie-labourer on the Sumatran plantation and urged that an independent Labour Inspectorate be set up... he appealed to the Christian conscience of the Dutch people." As an example of the attitude of the colonialists towards the local labour, he reproduced local advertisements. "One such advertisement asked for the detention of a run-away Javanese (blind in one eye); another offered to supply robust, young and healthy workers...together with prime cattle for slaughter or for draught work, all in one package!" Another writer (Van den Brand) then wrote also about the horrors being inflicted upon the laborers in Deli (Indonesia) and demanded reforms. The incessant brutality finally led to an investigation but such horrendous facts came to light that "the report itself was never disclosed to the public. Even authors who, later in the colonial period, set out to write of Coolie scandals and Deli 'millions' were not allowed to examine the findings of Rhemrev's investigations."<sup>20</sup>

Japan had fought a war against the China in 1894-5 for control of Korea and in 1910 Japan annexed Korea. Russia wanted Korea too. But Japan won the Russo-Japan war in 1904-5, the first "oriental" country to defeat a "white" nation.

## (9)

There were America's founders, such as Alexander Hamilton, who were exploiters by nature. And while wise in many ways, Benjamin Franklin did not only have a licentious lifestyle, but, in 1782, cruelly forged and distributed newspaper reports in Europe to say that the Indians (who were allies of Britain in the Independence War) were scalping, torturing and raping American women and children. It did win Europe's sympathy. But no one can ever tell how much these lies about the Indians perpetuated the hate and genocide over future years.

No one, however, not even his many detractors, could ever question the fact that Thomas Jefferson was not only very intelligent but a voracious reader with a fierce belief in human rights for all. So nothing proves how viciously biased the published works in European languages on Islam were in his times (he read in French and Italian too) when he, from all his reading, was brainwashed enough to believe, as he states in a letter to a Dr. Stiles in 1785 his understanding of Islam: "It is really a pity so charming a country [Turkey] should remain in the hands of a people whose religion forbids the admission of science and the arts among them."<sup>21</sup> This was no Christian fanatic, in fact he had prepared a highly controversial "selective" Bible, comprising of portions he felt more reliable than others, in the New Testament. It was not prejudice but brainwash from all the available literature to him, that he formed his opinion of Islam. And if this extremely refined individual could be so brainwashed, what of the rest?



Jefferson strongly proclaimed his belief that foreign policy should be: "I know but one code of morality for men, whether acting singly or collectively." In other words, a nation should treat foreign countries by exactly the same norms of morality as one is required to use as an individual. To England, this was laughable. The English Tory had developed a shrewd, strictly machiavellian rational for the squeamish: Government had to be *amoral*. As for the foreign policy makers in the English government, cold hard, national interests, free of all guilt and mushy sentiments was the sophisticated, intelligent route, which had brought England, a country with so little in its natural wealth, to become the most prosperous and the most powerful nation on earth. It was not just the Tories, and the emerging Liberals and even the Socialists who agreed that "Patriotism — the religion of the English" was right, but the Church did, too; the end justifies the means. England's colonial empire, was spreading Christianity all over the pagan world. Was that not what Jesus Christ had wanted?

In the US, it was significant that Alexander Hamilton, the illegitimate son of Rachel, a West Indian prostitute, was much enthrall with the Britain and its "amorality", while Thomas Jefferson, born to a mother with upper-class British links, had nothing but contempt for Britain's policies. There is vital lesson in this, as in so much of history, *if we have the courage to read the truth in history.*

American intellectuals and artists of the 19th century soon realized that they had to go to Europe to develop their talents. There had already been Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman who had suffered for their idealism, just as Presidents Jefferson and Lincoln had suffered for theirs. Walt Whitman, famous for his *Leaves of Grass*, was fired from his federal job for *Democratic Vistas* in which he wrote in 1871 "I say that our New World democracy, however great in uplifting the masses from their slough...is, so far, a complete failure in its social aspects...In vain we annexed Texas, California, Alaska and reach north for Canada and south for Cuba. It is as if we were somehow being endowed with a vast and thoroughly appointed body and then left with little or no soul."<sup>18</sup>

After Lincoln was assassinated, the new Republican Party was gradually owned by tycoons who placed their lackeys in government. Intellectual issues and culture were unimportant now, America, they insisted, was great because it was *rich*. So, they told the masses, more riches for its industrialists would make it greater. *It was England's formula for national success and they loved it.* They too sought to pressure labor to work their hardest at minimum wage. But the democratic constitution of the US, its premise that "all men are created equal" made it difficult to employ exactly the same methods and arguments in the US as in England. However, the advantages of unrestricted capitalism *could* be established as the core of American-style freedom, the essence of patriotism, especially with the vast majority of the public still uneducated and with millions of recent migrants yearning for acceptance, while struggling with the new language. American "neo-Conservatism" was on its way. With growing literacy, Big Business newspapers were becoming opinion-makers. The American constitution expressly allowed freedom of religion, and while the US was *not* officially a Christian state, the

American masses were for the most part religious at varying degrees of passionate faith, so an adaptation of "Patriotism — the religion of the English" would be dangerous to employ. But the next best thing, to a country of immigrants, seeking always to justify their dangerous gamble of migrating to a new country, was the Glory of the Flag, the New Jerusalem, which God had blessed with such miraculous good fortune that it was already the richest country in the world. At about the same time, the Dutch Boers were moving across the mountains in Natal, South Africa, to set up what they were convinced was their God-given New Jerusalem and they recorded their journey as similar to that of the Jews from Egypt seeking their "land of milk and honey". The Mormon sect of Christianity was founded by Joseph Smith in New York in 1830, with a claim that in visions, he had been provided the tablets of Moses. Mormons insisted Christianity permitted polygamy and rejected baptism. In the furious uprising against the Mormons, Smith was killed. Brigham Young then took the Mormons in 1843 on the Western Trail in search of the "New Jerusalem" which would be "heaven on earth" and apparently he found it in Utah. In 1890 the US government outlawed polygamy, and thereafter Mormon polygamy had necessarily to go underground.

In the meanwhile, the discovery of huge amounts of gold, the conquest from Mexico of what are now the Southwest and the West coast and the commencement of the transcontinental railway, led to greater extermination of the American Indians. The attitude of most Americans towards the American Indians was prompted at the *conscious* level by fear, coupled with greed for the riches over which the Indians had lived and ignored. The vast majority of Americans of the time were illiterates, they had risked the extreme dangers of crossing the Atlantic not only because they were of the lowest and poorest strata of Europe, but *they were that segment of Europe's poor to whom money meant more than to those other poor who stayed behind.* But there was more. From the very start Popes (such as Alexandria VI) had proclaimed that Christians had a right to the land and property of non-Christians. In the case of American Indians, there was the early Church's belief such as that expressed by St. Augustine, that as no such people were mentioned in the Bible, these were not the descendants of Adam and Eve. Whether this belief still permeated, at the *conscious* level among the American immigrants who had formed a republic in America, can never be known. What we do know is that leading figures like Andrew Jackson (later President of the US) justified his massive extermination of Indians in Florida because he (an illiterate himself *until he became President*) believed that they were "not intelligent", and that "they must disappear." Even Senator Frederick Douglas (of the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates) once said "Aborigines should die out in the civilization of Christianity."

In *Approach of Civilization Part II* (PBS Sept 11, '95) some of the gruesome massacres of the Indians were reported. In one instance, "Black" Kelly, leading an American military force intent to disseminate Lakota Indians at Sand Creek village, carried the US flag but waved a white flag to fool the Indians, so that when they attacked, the Indians, they could be easily killed. And they were. Five times as many Indian women as men were killed. The women's private parts were cut and

put on their caps by many soldiers as trophies and to prove that they were killed. The massacre led to great celebration in Denver (which had raised the cry "exterminate them") using the scalps of dead Indians. After the Homestead Act of 1862 and the building of the transcontinental railroad to Nebraska, the PBS documentary estimated that between 200,000 and one million Indians were killed "like locust" under General Sherman.

But with the new land, the railway and the gold, oil, gambling and prostitution rings, many Americans made fortunes in the Wild West. So prostitutes moved there in such large numbers that a contemporary report quoted in the PBS program said that the saying "There is no virtuous woman West of Shyan [Wyoming]"<sup>19</sup> was true.

In this milieu of instant wealth, rule by the Gun in the West and corruption in the Stock Exchange, in the Congress and in the White House under President Grant, the British formula of industrialization was perfectly acceptable to rich Americans and a great temptation for many of the rest. The fact that yesterday's penniless were today's millionaires, by legitimate or illegitimate means, was incentive enough for much of the American populace to accept present conditions, no matter how gruesome, waiting for their own Big Break.

Britain's Labour Party had concluded by now that the US was a Plutocracy, ruled by the rich, write Dimbleby and Reynolds in *An Ocean Apart*. But that was at government and Big Business level. Public sentiment still yearned for idealism. The Statue of Liberty, a gift from France for the American Centennial (but not installed in the US until 1886) had this inscribed on it, the work of an American poetess: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free." In the US, many, including new immigrants, were in awe of the newly-rich millionaires, and yearned to be that. But, in the meanwhile, some were unwilling to put up with death-defying conditions for a pittance, in the disease-ridden slaughterhouses in Chicago (about which Upton Sinclair wrote so powerfully) or being locked up during the day in assembly-line work (hundreds of women died at New York's Triangular Shirt Company from fire some years later because their bosses had locked them in to ensure a full day's work) or having entire families live in rat-infested one-room tenements. As in London, prostitution was rampant in the US's eastern cities as in the Wild West, and to make ends meet, part-time prostitution was even more commonplace. Workers revolted but were crushed. The Pullman strike was put down with bullets. Mother Mary Lease led a protest march when even a bill seeking to make \$1.51 a day the minimum wage was defeated in Congress. Williams Jennings Bryan, a social reformer, ran for president and lost three times, from 1896 onward. In 1896, General Jacob Coxley led a march of the poor and unemployed to Washington. He was jailed with the marchers. In 1904 just 1% of the population owned nearly 40% of the nation's wealth.

As we have seen, in its relations with rich Americans, Britain had claimed to have an overwhelming advantage over other European countries. As Belloc puts it, "the advantage of so singular a position has been that we [the British] can create in the non-English-speaking world of the Continent [Europe] an impression, not

yet dissipated, that the United States stand behind us in any threatened disaster; that there is, morally at least, if not technically, an Anglo-Saxon block[sic]."<sup>20</sup> Most Americans were *not* of English origin even at the time the United States was formed but most of the *founders* were, and the US had chosen English as its language over German by *just one vote*. It was an English language *not* in the form of what had by now developed in its best educated form as the King's English in England. In the turbulent early decades of the American experiment, English of the illiterate prevailed among the masses. This was learned by the non-English migrant, so that by the time Daniel Webster prepared his lexicography of the American language, it had a distinctly American flavor. In speech it was a mixture of Cockney, European ethnics speech, all with an impatient disregard for grammar.

But it was the "English" language which could be understood on both sides of the Atlantic. And promoted as such by Anglophiles in the US. America's proletariat had always thirsted for acceptance by aristocratic England. By the end of the 19th century, the English had used this American thirst so skillfully that even priests like Josiah Strong, an Ohio minister, proclaimed their belief in the superiority of the "Anglo-Saxon race." In *Our Country*, published 1885, he says "God, with infinite wisdom and skill, is training the Anglo-Saxon race for an hour sure to come in the world's future...can anyone doubt that the result of this competition of races will be 'the survival of the fittest'?" Note that this Christian priest uses the Darwinian phrase to support his racist view that Anglo-American colonialism is ordained by God! Hamilton would have agreed. Jefferson, one of the only American founders of genuine upper class ancestry, would have been furious. He had always warned against English government influence which he believed to be thoroughly corrupt. With his extraordinarily incisive mind, Jefferson once warned in an 1818 letter that Hamilton was "so bewitched and perverted by the British example, as to be under the thorough conviction that corruption was essential to the government of a nation."<sup>21</sup>

"I consider the government of England as totally without morality, insolvent beyond bearing... lost in corruption... hostile to liberty wherever it endeavors to show its head, and eternal disturber of the peace of the world!"<sup>22</sup> Jefferson wrote to Thomas Leiper, 1815. In March that same year, he wrote to Caesar Rodney "As to England, our government, I say, has still been overawed from a contest with them [the English aristocracy], and has ever countenanced and strengthened their influence [upon us] by proposing new establishments with authority to swindle yet great sums from our citizens. This is the British influence to which I am an enemy and which we must subject to our government or it will subject us to them."

There were other American leaders who shared Jefferson's concerns, even those who did not agree with him on other matters. "Europe is grown old with folly, corruption and tyranny" said Noah Webster "In that country [England] laws are perverted, manners are licentious, literature is declining and human nature debased. For America in her infancy to adopt the present maxims of the old world, would be to stamp the wrinkles of decrepit age upon the bloom of youth."

George Washington, himself of humble origins, was so deeply enamored of the English upper class that he sought desperately memorized rules to observe



towards British "superiors". And he lived with unrequited infatuation almost all his life for Sally Fairfax, the daughter-in-law of his former employer Lord Fairfax. The true inspiration which Washington should provide future generations and never did because the truth was hidden from them is that this same Washington, when his country needed him the most, brushed all that aside and led America to victory in its independence struggle. And Washington was to warn America in his Farewell Address as its first President: "*The nation that indulges towards another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degrees a slave...A passionate attachment ...produces a variety of evils...and it gives to ambitious, corrupt and deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation) facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country.*"<sup>23</sup>

But by the time the American Civil War ended (during which there was fury in the US when it was discovered that Britain was aiding the South by refitting its ships) political leadership was passed on to those who passionately sought close links with England for all the wrong reasons; Lincoln, that remarkable example of simple American idealism, had been killed, the "Stalwarts" of the new Republican party (formed in 1856), had now embraced Victorian-style "capitalism" with a vengeance. The new millionaire-monopolists gained control of government with appointees who dutifully argued that "freedom" and American patriotism meant complete freedom for business and industry, that income tax was bad, that if the business and industrial giants made money, it would trickle down eventually to the rest of the populace. The American rich were not aristocrats but they already transported castles and villas from Europe and built their own imitations. One tycoon (Vanderbilt) even had actors dress as English butlers, footmen and maids for formal balls and banquets.

The English upper class was not as yet willing to allow entry for newly rich Americans into their social circles — that would take many decades and only become reality when it was desperately necessary. For a considerable period, the American millionaires had to be content with cordiality provided by Britain (and the occasional marriage of an American heiress to an impoverished aristocrat) and in return provide it a share of the American wealth through special commercial ties. As Belloc wrote "England henceforth accepted the new power of the United States as one with which she must at all costs and under all conditions remain friendly. From that policy this country [England] has never swerved; it...has governed all our transatlantic relations from that day to this".

The Industrial Age had spread to the United States many years after Britain, but it accelerated much faster because natural wealth was constantly unearthed in newly-captured Western territories, creating instant millionaires and monopolists. In the strong bond between the American politicians and Big Business which developed in the post-Civil War era, Victorian capitalism was grasped with even greater zeal.

The European immigrants who now arrived continued to be almost entirely the proletariat who had risked the grave dangers of travel across the Atlantic to the wilderness of America because they had nothing to lose and everything to gain with the gamble. Like those who came from 17th century onwards, they were those to

whom money meant a lot more even than to those who remained behind in the relative safety but terrible conditions of their poverty in Europe. Even the revolt of the early settlers against English rule in America had been not for the idealism of a New Experiment which the intellectuals spoke and wrote about, but England's poor judgment in repeatedly imposing taxes and trade controls upon the Americas.

Now, those among the migrants who had made it rich in America yearned, more than ever, to be accepted by the elite of Europe, somehow to nestle slightly below the majesty of European aristocracy. Europe knew this. France, after its 1789 revolution and its own rejection of aristocratic privilege had only appealed to the few American idealist-intellectuals like Thomas Jefferson. France, in fact, was the first country to actually proclaim Human Rights for all mankind in its Declaration of Human Rights after the revolution (though it was to be abused by many French revolutionaries from the start). It should be remembered that, despite the best efforts of these American idealists, the American constitution carried no provisions for basic rights like freedom of speech, freedom of religion, even freedom from arrest without cause. It was these intellectuals which forced through the amendments called the Bill of Rights in 1789 on the lines of those about to be being proclaimed in France, but unlike France, these American provisions were to be applicable only to Americans, and — for many decades — to exclude even the American Indians or the black slaves. Once the revolution and the subsequent Napoleon phenomenon ended and France was acceptable to its neighbors, France regained attraction for the American status-seekers, but English aristocracy remained the ultimate panacea for those who now defined "the American Dream".

So unrestricted capitalism was soon established in the post-Civil War era as the core of American-style freedom, the essence of patriotism. But education was now spreading fast. As late as 1870, there were only 500 schools in all of the United States. But by 1900, there were 6,000. Big Business newspapers were coming to the fore, and they told the literate masses that the fortunes made by American millionaires should be a source of pride for all Americans.

The Monroe Doctrine (essentially claiming the Americas for Americans) had been announced after the 1812 War with Britain. The US sought new international markets outside the US early and aggressively. Commodore Matthew Perry had been sent in 1853 with gunboats to convince Japan to trade with the US. This unusual marketing technique had succeeded of course, though by 1924 Japan's exports had become so worrying to the US that it wished they had not. Fierce restraints were now placed on Japanese products as well as Japanese immigration, causing Japan, by now not only experts in international trade but infatuated with baseball and hot dogs, to commemorate the American restrictions with a National Day of Mourning.

US colonizing was still modest compared to what the European colonialists continued to achieve in their conquests of Asia and Africa. Germany had captured more French territories after the Franco-German War, and Bismarck now sought to

improve relations with France by offering his good wishes to France's colonial aspirations elsewhere. "This was partly why he encouraged French colonial enterprise", argues Davis<sup>23</sup>. With Turkey thoroughly weakened, France competed with the British and Italy for colonies first in Northern Africa's Muslim lands; it had already conquered Algiers; in 1881 France fought Italy for Tunis, leading to bad feelings between them for thirty years. Then the French entered Morocco; in 1891 the French had occupied Ivory Coast, Mahoney in 1892, Madagascar in 1895.

In some ways, Britain's amazing success in conquering and colonizing India, a sub-continent, had not only vastly enriched Britain. It had tempted other European powers of the huge windfalls which were available through winning trust of local rulers in ancient cultures and then to colonize them. If an ancient pillar of civilization like India could be conquered this way, other smaller lands could be very easily through winning trust. Britain's conquest had started with those early visits, such as that of the pirate Hawkins and ambassador Roe; the East India Company had been allowed by India to flourish as essentially a trading company, growing steadily through its multipurpose operations to spread its economic and political muscle across India and into the Far East. Using the same Machiavellian model it had in the Middle East, the rulers around India were encouraged in their desultory lifestyles, their hedonistic pursuits, naively accepting Britain's claims of friendship while they made extravagant concessions to the colonists until it was all too late.

# ( 11 )

Spain, having either killed or expelled much of its educated and experienced citizenry — the Muslims and the Jews who were not willing to be thoroughly and completely converted to strict Catholicism — had quickly sunk, as we have seen, to a haphazard decline despite the huge fortunes in treasures it wrenched from American Indian lands. But soon, Spain was losing its possessions in the New World, some to local rebellions, and others to the United States. Some Spanish missionaries who had gone later to the New World had prevailed upon the Spanish colonialists to be less brutal towards the American Indians. This improved image of Christianity enabled them to convert many tribes in Central and Southern America.

The US had expanded its own territories through wars, except for two large purchases; Jefferson had made the Louisiana Purchase from France at the start of the 19th century, almost doubling the size of the US as it then existed. At the end of that century, the US had bought Alaska from Russia. Alongside that peaceful expansion was the extermination of the American Indians, war against Spanish-Mexicans in 1848 leading to the conquest of Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Utah, Nevada and California and then the capture of Puerto Rico and Hawaii. But US adventures in Central and South America were primarily colonial without actual conquest. Over future years, the US would bring these "banana republics" (as US media called them in the 1950s), newly freed from Spain, as well as Brazil (former Portuguese colony) under its commercial dominance. Nicaragua was a particular

choice for invasion by the US in the early years, and bizarre theatrics were used to acquire the permit to build and own the Panama Canal in Columbia.

In *The Path Between The Seas* David McCullough provides interesting details. When Columbia refused the US offer of money for exclusive rights to the proposed Panama Canal, the US organized an insurrection in Columbia. A certain Manuel Amador ("a small bespectacled man") was selected as the leader of the rebellion. The *U.S. Nashville* was sent to aid the rebels, an adventurer Bunua-Varilla was selected as the negotiator for the rebels' new territory inside Columbia, now named Panama. Because US terms may have not been acceptable even to the friendly representatives of the rebels due to arrive in the US to sign the treaty, a hasty "treaty" was signed by the US with Bunua-Varilla before they arrived, reports McCullough; this treaty gave total control of the proposed Panama Canal to the US and increased its width from the previously agreed six miles to ten miles. To give official credence, a flag was purchased at Macy's, the New York department store, and proclaimed the new Panamanian flag. "The Treaty [now signed] did not even have the American proposed 100 year lease; it made the canal US property for all times"<sup>24</sup> wrote Mr. McCullough.

Many years later, in 1977, President Carter, facing growing insurrections of Panamanians felt the US should do the moral thing, return the Canal to Panama. Republicans, led by Ronald Reagan, were furious. Reagan, referred to Panama's leader, Brigadier-General Omar Torrijos, as "a tin-horn dictator" and demanded that US keep the Panama Canal: "We bought it, we paid for it" said the movie-educated Reagan, to thunderous applause. Carter did obtain Congressional approval narrowly for the return of the Canal to Panama, while retaining special rights for the US from the grateful Torrijos and Panamanians. But a few years later, the opponents to this deal had their revenge. Under President Bush (the father), the US invaded Panama, seized President Noreiga, took him to jail in the US because a US judge had ruled him guilty in absentia of exporting narcotics to the US. The livid Noreiga would provide proof to show *he had been a CIA agent for many years, and a close friend of George Bush*. But it was no use, He remains in jail today.



## Chapter 18

# Tightening the Noose around the Muslim World

(1)

The 19th century was yet another era when necessary review and reform of Muslim laws and practices should have been undertaken — *but by Muslims*. But the arm-twisting by Europe that demanded “reforms” in the Turkish state so obviously for its own needs again caused the *Ulema* and most Muslim Turks to associate all ideas of review or updating of religious practices with Western Machiavellian plots. Canning’s chicanery now was typical. When he succeeded his father Mehmed II in 1839, 16-yr-old Sultan Abdul Mejid, mild of manner and delicate, was dominated by his Georgian mother, the Sultana Valide, (Queen Mother), who, according to historian Palmer, had been a 15-yr-old bath attendant when she bore him. Stratford Canning, the British Ambassador “saw him from the first as a likely ‘royal’ pupil of his own.”<sup>1</sup> It was standard Machiavellian policy to seduce rulers of Muslim countries; some Britons had become quite skilled at it. A 16-year-old sultan, dominated by his foreign mother, herself notoriously corrupt, was a perfect target.

Canning had Reshid Pasha appointed Grand Vezir. He had been Ambassador in Paris, and was in London on a “special mission” (whatever that was) when he was made Grand Vezir. He quickly began “reforms” clearly “with a shrewd eye on European opinion”<sup>2</sup> says Kinross. On Nov 3, 1839 in a grand public display, with European ambassadors in attendance, and with the young Sultan present, Reshid announced a new Decree, the *Hatt-Sherif of Gulhane* or the “Noble Rescript of the Rose Chamber”, the first of many measures collectively known as the *Tanzimat* or “Reorganization.” A “Council of Justice” was created which the Grand Vezir insisted was free to rule by majority.

It was a charade, as its members were *selected* by the Sultan and his Grand Vezir, therefore any “disagreement” was most unlikely. One of the most important

elements in the new Tazimat reforms was “in its application of its rights to all Ottoman subjects, regardless of race or creed. This eliminated all distinction between Moslem and Christian and other non-Moslem.”<sup>3</sup> The new law eliminated the Poll Tax on non-Muslims and provided them equal rights in every way, including *the right to serve in the armed forces*.

Europe was pleased at this and Queen Victoria sent a message of congratulations to the Sultan. But non-Muslims within the Ottoman Empire were *not* so happy. They had new *obligations* now as equal citizens. “They were now liable for military service, from which they had hitherto earned exemption.”<sup>4</sup> The Muslim armed forces were not pleased either by this potential inflow of non-Muslims whose loyalty was, at best, questionable. Through the years, European leaders and their media had chosen to ignore the special privileges which non-Muslims enjoyed in the Ottoman Empire. In some cases, Christians had no doubt suffered discrimination, and European leaders had used these instances to propagandize and arouse the ire of their own citizens, to popularize their own colonial designs against the “unspeakable Turk.” Now, in the Ottoman Empire itself, “the Christians feared for the loss of special privileges, which furthered their educational development, while their clerical [religious] leaders feared for that of their own vested interests” (ibid). The Christian clerics also had special protection under the old system, which under the new “equality” rule, would *not* apply. They now regretted the campaign they had waged, using European influence upon the Sultan, to push through these “reforms.”

The Muslim populace and in particular the *Ulema* watched as these “reforms” drew the State even more under European domination. Matters came to a head in 1841, when Resid Pasha established a new Court of Justice within the Ministry of Commerce based on French law and introduced even greater privileges to European traders. When questioned by the *Ulema* about this departure from *Shariat*, he said (reports Kinross). “The holy law has nothing to do with such matters.”<sup>5</sup> The furor this created forced Abdul Mejid to quickly remove Reshid as Grand Vezir and send him back to Paris as Ambassador. He was replaced by Izzet Mehmet as Grand Vezir, while Riza Pasha (*the lover of the Queen Mother*, reports Kinross)<sup>6</sup> was made Commander-in-Chief. Riza Pasha was now forced to create two levels within the armed forces to ensure that the fighting forces remained dedicated and patriotic Muslims, while non-Muslims served also the armed forces *but in less dangerous roles*. Gradually, non-Muslims, could, if they wished, be freed altogether from the duty to serve in the armed forces, by the payment of an exemption tax, *as they had in the past*. They continued however to serve in the naval forces, *as they had all along*. But now Riza appointed a British naval officer, Adolphus Slade, to reorganize the navy. Slade had his own British agenda. He increased the recruitment of non-Muslims to “a force of ten thousand but failed to increase the number of fighting ships.”<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the Turkish naval *fighting* capability remained weak.

In the meanwhile, Stratford Canning, the British Ambassador, had established a unique domination over Turkey. In 1845 he arranged not only for the removal of the Commander-in-Chief Riza Pasha (the Queen Mother’s lover) but the removal

of İzzet Mehmed as Grand Vezir and the re-appointment of Europe's old friend Resid Pasha as Grand Vezir. This time, Reshid was more careful not to Europeanize too quickly. He tried to win the confidence of the *Ulema* by building new schools and even in laying the grounds for a state university. He had problems in the area of primary schools in which the *Ulema* wished religious education to be paramount. In secondary schools, secular education was gradually incorporated, while the Porte paid "lip service ... to the importance of religion."<sup>8</sup> Provincial governments were now offered the opportunity to reflect local sentiments in their governance, but Stratford Canning "keeping a watchful eye on the progress of the reforms"<sup>9</sup> found that the Muslim majority could vote democratically over the non-Muslim minorities. So in 1847, civil and criminal codes were changed to have "equal number of Ottoman and European judges, and a procedure deriving from European rather than Islamic practice"<sup>10</sup> was established in 1851. And now, once again, Reshid developed a commercial code giving special privileges to foreigners just as the Capitulations already provided foreigners protection against Turkish civil and criminal codes. The tribunals had Turkish and European members, but even the Turkish members were chosen by Reshid and his Sublime Porte (Government). In 1850 a new commercial code had already been established, distinct from Shari'at laws.

Now Britain had "emerged at the expense of France, as the leading trading nation in Near Eastern waters",<sup>11</sup> but shrewdly Canning ensured that the new laws provided enormous benefits to all Europeans. There was therefore a flood of new European traders. They prospered while Muslims found themselves increasingly crushed out of business, forced to seek employment in subordinate, even menial capacity; villagers had to move to the cities; "traditional crafts and industries declined at the expense of the artisan classes and peasantry. Within a generation the major cities had tripled and even quadrupled in size, with a large European and Levantine population, which tended to swamp the Turkish business classes, thus widening the gulf between non-Muslim and Muslim. Such were the fruits of free European economic penetration"<sup>12</sup> Kinross admits candidly.

In 1840 the government formed an Ottoman bank on European lines with guaranteed government subsidy. Paper money was introduced in the form of treasury bonds. The old coinage was replaced by one based on the British pound. But with foreign trade and manufacturers making huge *tax-free* profits each year under the new system, the government found itself in even greater deficit, and encouraged to take foreign loans. "In the Empire it was *not* the Moslem Turks who profited from banking and industrial investment. Nor any longer the resident Greeks and Armenians and Jews who had for so long amassed wealth as the middlemen. Now it was the capitalist enterprises of Europe itself which came to dominate the Turkish economy"<sup>13</sup>. This reinforced in financial terms the growing political hold European ambassadors like Canning had over the Sultan.

Reshid was openly recognized as corrupt. Abdul Mejid had been encouraged to lead a dissolute lifestyle, apparently more intent, under Canning's tutelage, on spending time with his harem than in governance. *By the time he was twenty he is*

*reported to have become the father of eight children in three years from his various women.* His extravagance knew no bounds. He had a new palace *Dolma Bahce* built on European lines, with European architects. He sought European actors, ballet dancers, built a theater within the palace. He brought European musicians and had Turkish musicians trained by them to play modern European compositions. The national debt skyrocketed, as did huge interest payments to foreigners and non-Muslim residents.

Canning was now called back to London. British Premier Lord Palmerston felt he deserved glorious honors. The British government had benefited greatly from his enormous influence over Abdul Mejid and the Sublime Porte. So had other Europeans. He received glowing tributes from the European community in Istanbul, and from non-Muslim residents, when he left, as many believed he was being transferred. But, in a few months, Canning was back, with a title. Now he was Lord Straford de Redcliffe.

## (2)

Tsar Nicholas I announced the usual Russian plan to capture Constantinople. But he added something new: a Byzantine Empire *free of Muslims*.

As the Ottoman state tottered on its meager resources, Tsar Nicholas went to London in 1844 for a conference. He met his British cousin-monarch Victoria and British government leaders. By 1853 when he held another "serious" discussion with the British ambassador, Russia and Britain had come to an understanding about sharing the fruits of dismembering the Ottoman State. "The Tsar's chancellor, Nesselrode, [also] agreed that the patient's [i.e., Turkey's] continued existence was precarious. It should, however, be prolonged for as long as possible. This was a view shared by the [new] British Prime Minister, Lord Aberdeen."<sup>14</sup> As always, it was clear that while all of the major European powers yearned to take the largest part of the Turkish Pie when the time was ripe, they were all just as keen to let Turkey exist as long as "the patient", despite its precarious state, was a source of considerable profits, in trade and interest-profits. Britain in particular was keen that its hold over the Ottomans would grow so much that when the Turkish State was eventually destroyed, Britain would grab the lion's share. Knowing this, Tsar Nicholas had sought to make an agreement in London and he now made an offer to British Ambassador Seymour that "As to Egypt, he would raise no objection to its occupation by Britain, together with the island of Crete."<sup>15</sup> Each Christian state sought to appease the others overtly, while it made its covert plans. *These covert moves then led to the three phases of the Crimean War.* Those of us taught about the Crimean War through English textbooks and through emotion-charged poetry like Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade" find it traumatic at first to find that the facts leading to that War, and the War itself, were very different from what we were taught.

"The Crimean War was not of its [Turkey's] own choosing; it was more the consequence of rivalry between the powers of Europe," admits Kinross. In 1844,



Tsar Nicholas proposed to Britain that Turkey could be dismantled *now*, and Russia and European colonialists could share the spoils: Britain could have Crete and Egypt, the Balkan states could come under Russia. But Britain, France and Austria were suspicious that what Nicholas really wanted eventually, like Catherine the Great had wanted, was the old Byzantine Empire for Russia. Britain, France and Austria still wanted "to keep the Sick Man of Europe alive as long as possible."<sup>16</sup> To Britain and France, the Sick Man was still very profitable in his present form. Sultan Mahmud I, through the latest Capitulation agreement of 1740, had granted France special privileges in Jerusalem. In fact all Catholics there were allowed French protection by the Sultan. The Tsar now demanded Russia should have not only protection over the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire, but "special favors" as well.

### (3)

In fact, there existed between "the Tsar Nicholas and the Emperor Napoleon III, protectors respectively of the Orthodox Greek and the Roman Catholic Church, a major conflict on a religious issue with strong political overtones."<sup>17</sup> *As in all matters, when proclaiming their love of Christianity, the yearning for gold was paramount.* On Palestine, for instance, Muslims "were thus respectful of the Christian shrines and of the monasteries which serve as their hospices."<sup>18</sup> The annual revenue drawn from the pilgrims who visited was collected by the Turks and given to the Christian states and "it rested with the Ottoman authorities to apportion between the rival Christian churches the share of this revenue."<sup>19</sup> Back in 1740, the French had obtained a larger share, but "with the rise of Russian imperial power, these privileges were usurped by the Greek Orthodox Church."<sup>20</sup> In 1850 Prince Louis Napoleon, French President "and aspiring Emperor" demanded from the Porte that the 1740 agreement must be re-established. "The dispute barked down to which of the Christian churches should have possession of the key to the chief door of the Church of Bethlehem, who had rights to the silver star on the Nativity (which had been wrenched from the Rock of the Manger and filched by the Greeks in a recent skirmish) and who should have the right to a cupboard and a lamp in the tomb of the Virgin."<sup>21</sup> Christian nations were ready to war against each other on this.

The Ottomans, fearful that such a war would draw Turkey in, tried their best to appease both France and Russia to no avail. So "at the end of 1852 the Tsar Nicholas, contemptuously refusing to recognize Napoleon III's recent proclamation as emperor, mobilized two army corps on the Danube... at the same time he put at readiness his fleet at Sebastopol"<sup>22</sup>. The following year he insisted on sending Prince Menshikov as Ambassador to Istanbul. Menshikov was "a crude blustering character who brought to diplomacy the rough tactics of the battlefield."<sup>23</sup> Church money issues arose again, and the threats he now made caused "the [Turkish] Porte to react with alarm and dismay." The French decided to send their fleet. The British ambassador asked his government to send a fleet of their own, but along

with that action, Stratford Canning, (now Lord Stratford de Redcliffe) reached an agreement with the French and the Russians, the only thorny problem was that of repair costs of the churches, both Russia and France insisting that the other should bear that cost. Turkey, nervous about another war on its doorsteps, offered to help end the dispute by agreeing to do these repairs and pay for them itself out of the *sick Turkish treasury*.<sup>24</sup>

But Russia's Prince Menshikov, noting the weakness of the Turks, now demanded that, the French had rights of protection over the Catholic nationals, Russia must also get similar rights over the Orthodox subjects of the Turkish nation. But France and Britain insisted France had never "aspired" to gain general protective rights over Catholics within the empire, whereas Russia was now demanding these rights over the millions of Orthodox Turkish subjects. This was threatening the independence of Turkey that they had all (*Russia included*) promised not to violate by the 1841 agreement. It was a provocative argument, suggesting that Turkey, of its own volition, *not from any European pressure*, had given protective rights over Catholics.

Britain and France were of course more concerned about curbing Russia's power than in protecting Turkey's rights. Russia saw through the subterfuge and was particularly angry because it was convinced that Britain's Redcliffe was making trouble through his influence over the Sultan and the Porte. "After an exchange of notes, rude from the Russian and polite from the Turkish side, Prince Menshikov took action in terms of a high-handed coup at the Porte, by ignoring the Grand Vezir and thus precipitating his [Grand Vizier's] resignation. He forced on the Sultan a new ministry to serve his own ends, with Reshid Pasha, whom he fondly imagined to be pro-Russian in sympathy, as Minister of Foreign Minister. In an audience with the Sultan he insisted in a hectoring manner on the need for a direct alliance between Turkey and Russia, irrespective of the European powers... Tsar Nicholas fumed at 'the infernal dictatorship of this Redcliffe'" reports Kinross.<sup>25</sup>

But Reshid Pasha was still a close friend of the British, not of Russia, and it was Redcliffe "who helped him draft an evasive reply."<sup>26</sup> The Russian ambassador angrily terminated his mission with threats and went back to his yacht where he lingered for a few days. Redcliffe called a conference with France, Austria, Prussia to decide on a joint decision on "The Eastern Question." They agreed to a rejection of Russia's "extreme demands." At Redcliffe's urging, the Sultan was recalled from his harem to send a firm response to Russia, that Russia's demand of suzerainty over all Orthodox Christians within the Turkey's own borders was not acceptable. The Sultan also sent copies of his previous declarations, "confirming in perpetuity all privileges to the Greek Church" guaranteed by bond to which the four powers were witness. The Sultan's Council sent this to remind the Russians that Turkey had already committed "in perpetuity" considerable privileges for the free practice of religion to the Orthodox, that Turkey was objecting now only to the Russian demand of religious and secular right over all Christians.

The European powers decided to intercept the Sultan's courteous note to Russia. "The [Sultan's] note was not passed on to the Tsar," admits Kinross. It was the Four

Powers "who rejected it in favour of a Vienna note of their own."<sup>27</sup> When Russia received that "Vienna note" written by the Four Powers, the Russians ordered their embassy in Istanbul closed. Russian troops crossed the Pruth and occupied the Turkish protectorates of Moldavia and Walachia. British and French fleets moved into the Dardanelles, just outside the Straits (from which they were in fact barred by the treaty of 1841). In the meanwhile, the Turkish government (the Porte) had angrily rejected the note that the Four Powers had sent to Russia in place of the note sent by the Sultan. The Vienna Note, prepared and sent by the Four Powers provided slyly for both Russia and France to have pre-emptory rights over Turkey's Christian subjects! *Whatever happened to Britain and France's objection to Russian "interference in the internal affairs of Turkey"?* Britain and France did not explain.

The Grand Council of the Sultan itself angrily rejected the Vienna note manufactured by the European Powers in Turkey's name. In London, the British government claimed to be entirely ignorant of the crude switching of notes; it was also upset for another reason: the "Vienna note" had made European intent too obvious and subject to embarrassment. There were demands in Parliament that Redcliffe should be sacked for making such a crude switch. In response to this, Redcliffe denied that he had been party to the switching of notes.

In the meanwhile there was an uprising of the Turkish masses led by the *Ulema* as news of the "notes switching" became known. The British and the French governments decided that the best response to this was a military threat directed at Turkey. They decided to ignore the 1841 treaty and moved their ships right to the Turkish shores.<sup>28</sup> A terrified Porte put down the rebellion, exiled some of the *Ulema* and, according to some sources, jailed and executed others.

There was now a hardening of views on all sides, each aware that the hypocrisy of diplomatic shenanigans could no longer work in this instance. British Foreign Secretary Lord Clarendon said the switching of the Vienna note by the European powers had been a mistake and Turkey was right to reject it. However Emperor Louis Napoleon's London ambassador stressed upon Britain the need to control the seething rebellion among the Turkish public, and Britain agreed. It was one thing for Turkey to be right. It was quite another to let the Ottoman Empire get revived by a national Islamic fervor, which seemed imminent. So Britain and France now sent more ships to Turkey.

Russia held a private conference with its ally Austria, and made the surprising announcement. Russia said it was willing to withdraw its demand for control over all Christians in Turkey, that the "duty of protecting Christians [within the Turkish domain] should rest with the Sultan." France was willing to accept this but Britain was not. Kinross puts this in careful diplomatic style to protect Britain: "Britain's mistrust of Russia's intention had now been aroused too far to be thus easily appeased. Therefore Straford [de Redcliffe] was given a final peremptory order to bring up the fleet. This reflected a strong wave of anti-Russian public opinion in England."<sup>29</sup>

As soon as Redcliffe received this order, he pressured Turkey to make a formal declaration of war against Russia on Oct. 4 1853.<sup>30</sup> Why did Turkey agree

when Russia had backed down? On so many recent occasions, the Turks had given in to more unfair foreign demands in order to avoid war. *But by now Redcliffe's power over Turkey was so complete that he could induce this self-destructive course.*

#### (4)

The same day that Turkey declared war, "the Anglo-French squadrons sailed up through the Dardanelles, colours flying, into the Golden Horn."<sup>31</sup> It was the preliminary phase of what history books would call the Crimean War.

It started disastrously for the Turks. In their first naval encounter with the Russians at Sinope in the Black Sea, the commander sent an urgent message that the Turkish forces were outnumbered and urgently needed French and British fleets to help. *But no help came.* "Owing to confusion and indecision in allied counsels, British and French, diplomatic and naval, these were not authorized," is Kinross' explanation. Whatever the reason, the Turkish ships were destroyed by the Russians and "three thousand Turks were slaughtered" he admits.<sup>32</sup> Russia celebrated this with a special musical theatrical performance *La Bataille de Sinope* at St. Petersburg.

There was much hand-wringing in London and Paris. At the start of the New Year 1854, more British and French ships sailed "to sweep the Black Sea clear of the Russian fleet."<sup>33</sup> However, concurrently, London informed Russia that "this was a demonstration, not an act of war."<sup>34</sup> But the Tsar knew who had induced Turkey to declare war. He withdrew his diplomatic representatives from London and Paris and sent the French and British ambassadors back home. So on March 27 1854 the French Emperor informed his Senate that they were at war with Russia. Britain was left with no alternative now and the following day it too declared war on Russia. Russia's official declaration of war against these European powers came, curiously, fifteen days later. *The Russian declaration was carefully worded to make Turkey the target.* The Tsar said Russia was on "a divine mission" against the enemies of Christianity (i.e., Turkey) with whom Britain and France had chosen to ally themselves this time!

Russia's forces attacked Turkey in the lower Danube; Britain and France now signed a treaty with Turkey to defend its empire and the security of Europe. But when Russia laid siege to Silistria. Britain had chose to recruit its *Indian* army for this war and saw it all as a game. The British "in sporting fashion, organized a sweepstake to name the date when Silistria might be relieved."<sup>35</sup> In fact Britain did not even try to relieve it. The Russians bombarded the Turks for five weeks; the Turks somehow withstood the onslaught. Finally the Russians withdrew, exhausted, allowing the Turkish defenders a victory. The British and French objective in inducing this war was now clear. *They hoped, with minimal involvement of their own forces, to reduce Russia's growing military power and, concurrently, let the Turkish military strength sink to a new low.*

But somehow the Turkish forces were performing better than anyone had expected. On the Danube, a Turkish force (led by an Englishman General Cannon



now converted to Islam called Behram Pasha) met another Russian force.<sup>36</sup> The Russians were beaten back. Another Turkish force forced the Russians to retreat not only in that engagement, but also from Moldavia and Wallachia. "The humiliation to his [the Tsar's] pride and the blow to his prestige were the hardest to bear because they were inflicted, *not* by the European armies, but through the bravery and revived military prowess of the long-despised Ottoman soldiery—with the aid of a few British officers."<sup>37</sup>

The British Cabinet and Emperor Napoleon III both felt somewhat humiliated themselves, that their forces had not done much and that despite all their high-profile declarations of war, this Danube War (a preamble to the Crimean War) was essentially a victory for the Turks. "Emperor Napoleon [III] needed war as a means to exalt his new dynasty, while the British people craved it in a mood of fervent patriotic adventure. Their eyes were on Sabastopol."<sup>38</sup> This, then, had been the reason for the British and French instigation of the war. Now Britain and France commenced their attack towards Sabastopol by invading and taking the port of Eupatoria, north of Sabastopol. The main phase of the Crimean War was underway.

Turkey was required to offer assistance and it did, though the British commander "brushed the Turks aside...Fought in part as a war for war's sake but in the long term as a further act in the classic struggle for power between Russia and the West, the Crimean campaign was the first in history to be fully covered by press correspondents."<sup>39</sup> This was the prime reason why Britain had "brushed the Turks aside" now. The new image game was underway. Britain was very keen to present its forces as the brave ones in the new glare of newspaper reporting.

For a full year from then on, the British public was provided accounts of the Crimean War in a form which massaged the national ego. "All [battles] were staged on a Homeric scale, bands playing and colours flying...[at home] Patriotism took fire as the populace gloried in its heroics, bowed to its tragedies, raged at its confusion and at the blunders of the Anglo-French command [each blamed the other for defeats]. Hearts glowed with pride as the cannons thundered and the Light Brigade charged into the Valley of Death; trembled with horror at the agonies of man and beast through the cruel, hard, plague-stricken winter; sighed with relief at the merciful apparition of the Lady of the Lamp [Florence Nightingale] as she strove to silence the beating of the wings of the angel of death in the hospital wards of Scutari."<sup>40</sup>

Nightingale was later to be virtually canonized as the ultimate angel of mercy. Mindful of the need to denigrate the Turks (even though they were Allies), she wrote home contemptuously about Istanbul. On a rainy day "the Golden Horn looked like a bad daguerreotype washed out."<sup>41</sup> she wrote. *A much more warm description was provided by a more honest nurse, Sister Sarah Anne, who wrote home about "this most beautiful view of all the world...these painted houses, gay gardens and glittering minarets."* Historian Palmer adds "For the remainder of the decade a succession of books in English - many of them by women authors - sought to counter the prejudice of centuries against the 'terrible

Turk". Nightingale "the angel of mercy" and newspapers, the new weapon of image-making were used blatantly against the Turks. In reality, the Turks were "led by incompetent [British] officers", says Kinross and suffered a defeat in the defense of Balacava. The following year, the Turks under the command of Omer Pasha, fought courageously "repulsed a superior Russian force, and thus inflicted a last humiliation on the Tsar Nicholas. He died a fortnight later, to be succeeded by his son Alexander II, who was soon ready for peace... Belatedly...the allies thought to enroll a Turkish force of some twenty thousand men... but it was not to fight, [it was] for the final capture by the French of Fort Malakhov, in September, 1855, [which] led to the fall of Sabastopol and the end of the Crimean campaign — to the reluctance of the British, who wished to continue the fight, but on the insistence of the French whose aims had been vindicated to the satisfaction of the Emperor Napoleon III."<sup>42</sup>

The Treaty of Paris ending the Crimean War was signed in the spring of 1856. As we have seen, it was a War provoked by Britain, France and Russia into which Turkey had been drawn and made to suffer heavy casualties. Yet the terms of the treaty now *punished the Turks*, who no longer had the power to do more than protest weakly. "The Danube principalities were returned by Russia to Turkish sovereignty, but now the European powers decided they should be the 'protectors' [of these principalities]. The Danube would now be under an international commission, the Black Sea was neutralized, its waters and those of the Straits of Dardanelles and of the Bosphorus were to be open to merchant vessels but closed to naval forces."<sup>43</sup> But the Ottoman Empire was relieved by one stipulation "by all the Christian powers...an undertaking, in the treaty, to respect the independence and territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire...in fact, whether or not the allied victory in the Crimean War was justified, in the long term, its enormous cost in human life and financial expenditure, the Treaty of Paris, as signed by the Western powers and Russia, at least calmed for the next two decades the familiar conflicts inherent in the Eastern Question"<sup>44</sup>. Turkey's right were confirmed again by the Treaty. Two decades later, the Christian powers decided the time was ripe to violate it.

Some other provisions in the Treaty were even more damaging to Turkey's Muslim population. The Imperial Rescript, drafted by the British, was incorporated into the Treaty. In essence, these provisions of the Rescript formally removed Islamic Sharia from the Ottoman Empire and replaced it with French and British law, says Mansfield. *And, he adds, state ownership of property was replaced by private ownership of property with full rights of disposal and succession.* There were to be enormous misuse and corruption from these new provisions. With "freedom" in trade and industry, Turkey's own infant industries were squashed, without protection, against their large and more mature European competitors. Predictably, in 1867, the land code was quietly changed to allow foreigners to own land, *freehold*, in the empire.<sup>45</sup>

## (5)

The huge expense of the Crimean War was the last straw on Turkey's treasury. Britain and France, who had instigated the war, did not share its expenses, but they induced the Sultan to borrow more money from Europe, from Rothschild's bank, reports Anthony Lewis. By Oct. 1875, Turkey was, in effect, bankrupt.

In these dark hours, Turkey sought consolation from the provision of the Treaty of Paris that the European powers would never "interfere either collectively or individually in the relations of the Sultan with his subjects or in the internal administration of the [Turkish] Empire"<sup>46</sup> (Kinross). Yet, as Mansfield says, "In 1861, following a civil war in Lebanon, between Maronite Christians and Druze," Napoleon III, as protector of Christians, landed troops to Beirut. The sultan had to accept autonomy for Lebanon under a Christian governor, chosen by the European powers. When the Serbs revolted in the 1860s, Western pressure forced Turkey to withdraw its troops from the area. Then the Cretans were to rebel and declared their union with Greece. "Although the Ottomans forces were able to quell the revolt, the Western powers convened a conference in Paris at which Turkey accepted Crete's autonomy under Christian governors."<sup>47</sup> In 1876, the Bulgarians revolted. This time the Turks reacted fiercely. So Western powers and their media condemned the "barbaric Turks."

## (6)

With Redcliffe back in Istanbul, once more using his hypnotic power over the current Sultan Abdul Majid, there was friction between Britain and France. France, which had sought a quick end to the Crimean War, was gaining in influence at the Porte over the British, who had wished to continue the war and gain more glories (Redcliffe is reported by Kinross to have said "I would rather have cut off my right hand than have signed that [peace] treaty."). Redcliffe was recalled and replaced by Sir Henry Bulwer.<sup>48</sup> And, to counter France's influence, London now bestowed a knighthood on the Sultan.

The Ottoman treasury, however, was empty. The "reforms" the Ottomans had been pressured by European powers to make, allowed foreign businesses to totally dominate the Turkey's economy, yet pay no taxes. The first foreign loan taken by the Ottomans after Crimean War was from Rothschild's Bank through Britain and France at a usurious interest rate. So there was the loss of revenues from foreign business domination, the Sultan's extravagance, the huge expenditures of the Crimean War, and now the huge interest charged by Rothschild. The vicious cycle became more vicious with each passing year. Sultan (Sir) Abdul Majid died in 1861, many suspected from harem excesses. He was only thirty-seven. His brother Abdul Aziz, now Sultan, also a Redcliffe disciple, differed from his brother only to the extent that he was physically robust and apparently keen to outdo his brother in the size of his harem. In 1867 Britain and France, financial debt notes in hand, commenced again to demand more "reforms." Abdul Aziz was cautious however. He said the nation should

economize (which did not include his own extravagance, of course), but he was also more mindful of the wishes of the public who sought changes, somewhat less willing to do Europe's bidding for further enrichment of Europe. For all practical purposes, of course, it was all too late.

A new era was dawning within the empire. Europeanization of the past two regimes had led to a new generation of Turks. There were those who were educated in the Western style, knew one or more European languages, who had lived and studied in Western capitals and wanted to Europeanize. There were others who sought reform in Turkey but within Islamic principles, based on its concepts yet divorced from built-in ethnic mores of Muslim societies that for centuries had become fused in the minds of its practitioners with the religion. A clash between the two movements was inevitable.

The movement that now emerged was a pragmatic and therefore weak fusion of the two, a reform movement of young citizens, writers and intellectuals, who had studied in Europe, and were clearly influenced by the concept of rights and privileges that were gradually emerging even in hidebound societies such as England. But France was the main inspiration for change, to Istanbul and Cairo. There now emerged a secret organization that would soon become the first political party in Turkey, the "Patriotic Alliance."<sup>49</sup> From this evolved what was dubbed in history books as the Young Ottomans (as distinct from the later "Young Turks" movement). Their founders included protégés of Reshid Pasha (the Grand Vizir allied to the Europeans) but they also included devout Muslims like Namik Kemal, who sought to direct the reform movement strictly on Islamic directives. They were soon associated with the Egyptian movement under the Egyptian Prince Mustafa Fazil, who, Western writers say, had his own agenda, i.e., to usurp his older brother to the title of Khedive, rather than to seek reform *per se*. But he was an Egyptian prince, he was wealthy and the Young Ottomans needed such backing. Their early and fierce demands for reform however got them exiled from Istanbul into the provinces, from where they escaped to Paris, reportedly with Prince Fazil's help, and began, with Ali Suavi, a dissident newspaper editor already in Paris, the newspaper called *Hurriyet*, or "Freedom."

In 1867, Sultan Abdul Aziz went for conferences to London and Paris. On his return, he decided (or was instructed) that he must rule as an absolute monarch, like the Russian Tsars. He ran through six Grand Vizirs in three years. Then, to counter the growing indignation among the religious segments, he announced he wished to make the Ottoman Empire more Islamic. But having seen the luxurious lifestyle of royalty in Europe, he also commenced lavish entertainments at the European-style *Dolme Balche* palace for his European guests. The palace cost two million pounds sterling a year in its upkeep alone. Europe's bankers were most encouraging, willing to provide larger amounts of loans. In the past twenty years the Ottoman debt had risen from four million pounds sterling to two hundred million pounds sterling. And the interest charged by the European lender alone took more than half of the government's annual resources, admits Kinross. Final bankruptcy was inevitable.<sup>50</sup>



To add to public miseries, in 1873 there had been droughts and famine; agriculture was devastated, villagers were starving. There was not enough money to conduct the business of government. But some shrewd members of the Porte announced in the newspapers that the bankrupt nation could no longer pay the entire annual interest to its foreign creditors in cash, as it had been doing, but would pay half of it in cash and the rest in government bonds.

The European moneylenders were horrified. To save their own loans to Turkey, they would now have to ensure Turkey's survival. The wealthier Turks of Armenians and Greek origins were furious because they held government bonds and their values would now fall. They had done very well with them in prosperous times, with "non-Muslim" special privileges and commercial advantages; but now, with Turkey close to economic collapse, they felt they must demand independence now to save themselves from drowning in Turkey's debts. Insurrections broke out in various areas. The Porte was in a panic, with the economic chaos, the external threats from European creditors and now these rebellions at home. The Muslim populace was in revolt too but they wanted genuine reforms, not independence and they were now joined by many non-Muslims Turks. The Young Ottomans joined in a united front with theology students, serious young Muslims who were fiercely critical of the degenerate lifestyle of recent sultans and their pro-West policies.<sup>51</sup>

Among the non-Muslim insurrections that now surfaced for independence, the most violent was in Bulgaria. That was apparently triggered from religious passions kindled by their leaders. Kinross reports "they [Bulgarian Christians] turned savagely on the Moslem Turks," i.e., on Muslim citizens there. Bulgarian rebels moved upon the Muslims populace of the area, and massacred them. This massacre was finally ended after ten days by "Turkish irregular forces let loose in revenge."<sup>52</sup> British newspapers dramatically reported these excesses of the Turkish irregulars, while ignoring or underplaying the original savagery of the Bulgarians, which started it all. Britain's *Daily News* newspaper was the most aggressive in its reports, with stirring accounts of the havoc wrought by the Turks, says Kinross. The policy of such newspapers, hostile to Turkey, was to become a "tradition" in the West in future years, i.e., to concentrate upon the effect, never the cause. The fiery attack by Bulgarian Christians who had massacred the Muslim citizenry was ignored, only the "havoc wrought...by a primitive and fanatical soldiery" was focused upon. Gladstone brought out a pamphlet to say the Turks must be thrown out of Europe.<sup>53</sup>

These newspaper accounts were later "found" to have been highly exaggerated, but by then the damage was done. Passions were aroused all over Europe, the image of the Turk as barbarian was once more popular in Europe. England, having subdued Scotland, Wales and much of Ireland to form Great Britain, and owning vast colonies around the world, saw itself as the center of civilization. The word "civilization" was found to be extremely useful one to use by Christian societies to describe themselves.

There were those who felt a truly civilized society does not call itself civilized. Personal hygiene in the West was still crude, London was a city with no sewers,

surfeited with filth; crime and prostitution were rampant, the houses of Parliament themselves were, as we have noted, notorious for the putrid smells from the Thames. Honest sociologists and some historians recorded all this. But these facts were unknown in the colonized parts of the world, thousands of miles away. There, Britain's representatives carefully maintained a clean, impeccable image. The rationale Britain had established as to why this small island should rule or have suzerainty over vast, rich Eastern countries was that they [the foreign populace] were barbarians. How could this be if the lifestyle of these Eastern foreigners was far more advanced than that of Europeans? Religion. That old rationale for colonial conquests was hinted upon again. They were barbarians because they were Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, not Christian or Jewish. As European Jewry now prospered economically and especially after Disraeli became so important, Jews were being accepted gradually, in the West.

So Jewish leaders soon decided to expunge from Jewish minds whatever obligation they felt towards Muslims for their survival over the centuries. As media grew in power and with it, Jewish control of it, "Western civilization" increasingly became the battle-cry, not "Christian civilization." This did not always please some religious Christians, but it enthralled powerful Jews, and provided a rationale just as good for Britain's conquests. Other European countries sought to conquer foreign lands, but Britain now had a vast advantage. To some measure, the United States provided direct and indirect aid to Britain's image. In the 20th century, its media, entirely in English, gradually replaced French as the medium of mass communication on the world stage.

Russia now sought not only to encourage "revolt among the Christian Slavs of the Balkan provinces, but to find ways through its Ambassador Ignatiev to incite the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Aziz against reform," even encourage the Sultan to subdue revolts with an iron hand, in effect to "form a government in which, as in Russia, the sovereign was absolute master."<sup>54</sup> Mischief making was clearly Russia's intent.

In early 1876, 6,000 Muslim theology students in Istanbul left their studies to amass at the Grand Porte, demanding reforms and the removal of the corrupt Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim as well as the corrupt Grand Mufti (the High Priest). The theological students had protested periodically for centuries now, but this time they were organized. They aligned themselves, for political muscle, with the Young Ottomans.

So powerful was the mass demonstration that the Sultan was forced to give in. He fired the Grand Vizier and the Grand Mufti. But now this was not enough. The fiery demands for a constitution were growing. The theological students, as well as the religious elements in society were also demanding a democratic form of government, for religious reasons. Religious Turks maintained that "absolute authority usurped the rights of the people and thus infringed on the Sacred Law. Obedience to a sovereign who does not follow Islamic directives is against the religion, they had long maintained" writes Kinross. The demand for constitutional government took a dramatic turn on May 30, 1876, when the military joined in the

*protestors*. This military support was vital for the revolutionaries, as they had feared European countries would help the Sultan crush real reform with force. A manifesto was presented by Midhat Pasha, as leader of the "Young Ottomans" to the Sultan signed by "Muslim Patriots." The *Dolma Bahçe* palace was surrounded by two battalions on the grounds, two vessels of the Turkish forces on the Bosphorous side of the Palace, "while another vessel was stationed opposite the Russian summer embassy, farther upstream, to preclude any intervention by Ignatiev. Then Midhat and his fellow ministers met at the War Ministry, where the [new] Chief Mufti read the *ferva* [religious proclamation] "deposing the sultan Abdul Aziz for, among other grounds, 'conduct injurious to state and community'. The ministers took the oath of loyalty to his nephew and heir, Murad V"<sup>55</sup> who was amenable to serious reforms.

But within three months Murad V was declared an alcoholic and mentally unstable. In the meanwhile Abdul Aziz had committed suicide. Now Murad's younger brother Abdul Hamid II was sworn in as Sultan, after a *ferva* (edict) was issued by the Chief Mufti, formally declaring Murad deposed "on the grounds of mental incapacity."

A new constitution for the Ottoman Empire was signed in December 1876. Midhat Pasha was appointed Grand Vizier. To placate European powers, the constitution had been drafted on the lines of the recent constitutions of Prussia and Belgium. But the new Sultan had made some changes in the draft of the constitution, and left out the date when the new constitution would come into effect. However Abdul Hamid himself "called upon the Greek and Armenian patriarchs - who were normally themselves expected to call upon the Grand Vizier - with the assurance that under this constitutional regime, men of all creeds would be regarded as equals. The Greek Patriarch declared in reply 'We consider you the resuscitator of the Ottoman Empire.'<sup>56</sup>

Russia and Austria, along with the Serbs, felt very frustrated about these reforms in Istanbul. If Turkey was to become a reformed state, it might gain strength again, and *be hard to liquidate when the time came*. Friction was necessary to thwart that. "In 1876 the Balkan revolt had erupted into an open declaration of war against the Porte by Serbia and Montenegro, aided by the Russians. But within three months the Turks had defeated the Serbs, and were only checked from a victorious march on Belgrade by the direct intervention of Russia, who insisted on an armistice. The Russian and Austrian emperors, supported by Germany, then produced the Berlin Memorandum. Despite Turkish victory, however, the terms of this memorandum "implied ultimately a joint military occupation of Ottoman territory."<sup>57</sup>

Serbia and Austria saw that European powers backed anyone who took Turkish lands. In 1876 Austria seized Bosnia and Herzegovina, after a Serbian revolt which Turkey put down. This clashed with Serbia's plans for a Greater Serbia, and it reacted fiercely. Britain expressed only token disapproval at the Austrian seizure, and clear violation of the Treaty of Paris, and it was silent on Serbian antics. So was France. *Was there a secret understanding?* It is impossible

to tell. What is clear is that to provoke a major "incident" and draw the major powers into a crisis so that it could become free of Austria and gain "Greater Serbia", Serbia acted with increasing abandon. It was eventually Serbia that would provoke the crisis in 1914 that would lead to World War I.

In the meanwhile, *Turkey annoyed its enemies by conducting genuine, major reforms*. The new 1876 Turkish constitution and impending unification of all segments in the Ottoman state, with Germany's support, frustrated Russia and Austria as much as it did Serbia, all keen, as always, to urgently use the religious issue as the excuse for enforcing the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. *The reforms that were now announced in Istanbul, declaring complete equality between all subjects of all races and religions, annoyed Western European powers too*. Europe felt robbed of the powerful religious issue. Russian and Austrian strategists decided they must force disintegration of the Ottoman state *before* its reforms neutralized religious passions of Balkan Christians. Britain did not favor the rushed disintegration of Turkey *for the present*. Britain still raked in immense profits from Turkey. Besides, it was peeved that it had not been consulted in the formulation of the Berlin Memorandum.

## (7)

In the latter decades of the lengthy Victorian regime, Disraeli and Gladstone alternated as Prime Ministers. Disraeli, born in an orthodox Jewish family (the family name was Israel, changed by his father to D'Israeli and then changed by Benjamin himself to Disraeli) had converted to Christianity, many felt for political reasons. He never hid his deep emotional attachment to Jewish society and to Zionist ideals and aspirations. In fact, Disraeli was to be the inspiration for the revival of Zionist hopes.

Britain by now had two major political parties, the Tories and the Whigs. The Tories (the name derived from an old word for "highwaymen", the brigands who robbed and raped in country lanes and highways of England) were the more "conservative" politically, i.e., they believed that tried and proven methods of the past were the best, because they worked best for the aristocracy system and change was to be avoided unless it was essential. Therefore machiavellian tactics which had worked so many miracles of duplicity, were clearly the methods to rely upon. The Whigs (later Liberals) were generally considered the more progressive in outlook, somewhat more open-minded and "wet" (emotionally moral) on some issues, but broadly, both saw Machiavellian diplomacy in foreign policy as the tried and proven formula for success.

The socially ambitious Disraeli had decided early that he should be a Tory because "I cannot condescend to be a Whig." Initially, however, he met with rejection in his attempts to be acceptable to the British upper class. So he decided to win them over through meeting them overseas. He went on "The Grand Tour" of Europe and the Ottoman Empire, a popular practice among upper-class Britons of the time. Some upper-class Britons he sought out overseas rejected him



contemptuously. Disraeli is reported to have been very comfortable and happy in Turkey, however, where he was warmly received. He visited Jerusalem. *He expressed deep emotions for Zionism.* He was to write more about Zion over the years. In one novel, *Alroy*, he depicted his hero David Alroy as a twelfth-century Iraqi Jew who rebelled against the Muslim Caliph. It was a new confrontational image promoted by Disraeli of the Jews, who had, through the centuries, been far more friendly and grateful to Muslims. But Disraeli fiercely promoted a "Judeo-Christian" political and religious alliance "He remained true to his Jewish origins and liked to see himself as 'the missing page between the Old Testament and the New'... In 1829 he made a passionate speech in the House of Commons: 'What is your Christianity if you do not believe in Judaism?'"<sup>58</sup> Disraeli played a critical role in the cementing of the "Judeo-Christian" identity, and in the steady rejection of Jewish ties with the Muslim world, even as he professed friendship with Turks.

Initially, Disraeli stood for Parliament three times as an Independent and lost. Then extraordinary luck brought him powerful contacts; his intelligence and oratory was considerable and eventually he succeeded far beyond even his own wildest dreams to become Prime Minister through a very personal bond he somehow established with Queen Victoria. It is likely that his powerful position as Prime Minister encouraged (if not actively involved in) the concept and formation of the first Zionist Congress in 1897.

Either because he wished to prove he could be as fierce a colonialist as any native Anglo-Saxon Christian, or because he firmly believed in colonizing, *Disraeli's policies did more to expand the British Empire across the globe than any Prime Minister before or since.* His power grew with his influence over Queen Victoria. Victoria, according to all objective historians was not only very naive about world affairs, but also not intelligent. She became putty in Disraeli's hands. She was very receptive to his extravagant flattery, especially after her husband and German cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, had died.

Regarding Turkey, Disraeli announced to the European powers that instead of the provisions they had demanded in Berlin, there should now be a "Constantinople Conference", to demand reforms from the Porte which were to the liking of Christian Europe. It did not bother the European powers that history might question their sincerity at this insistence, which ignored the provisions of the Treaty of Paris, ignored the fact that Turkey, on his own volition, had already proclaimed a new constitution on the lines of Prussia and Belgium. *In fact by these provocations, the West must have seen they would incite the extremist elements in Turkey to gain public support against healthy reforms already being discussed in Istanbul.* They did hold a "Constantinople Conference" in Istanbul in January 1877 (which even Kinross, always an apologist for latter-day Britain, says "came to an abortive close").<sup>59</sup> Note that it was called the "Constantinople Conference," not the "Istanbul Conference." In the meanwhile, the Serbs and Turkey had arrived at a separate peace treaty, ensuring *status quo* of territories held by the Serbs. This peace frustrated Russia, and it announced that it now rejected the Treaty of Paris through which

the European powers had promised the territorial integrity of the Ottoman empire, and undertaken not to interfere in its internal affairs.

Sultan Abdul Aziz felt certain that the European powers, all signatories to that Treaty of Paris, no matter how biased they may be against Turkey, would never permit Russia, Serbia and Austria to arbitrarily reject that Treaty. He was convinced through comments communicated to him by his representative in London that Britain, with its own commercial interests in Turkey, Suez Canal, Egypt and the Mesopotamia region, would assist Turkey in case of a Russian invasion.

As always, *Muslim Turkey's* assessment of European politics was naive. In London former premier Gladstone still demanded that "the unspeakable Turk" pay for what he still called the Bulgarian massacre, and "cruelty to their Christian subjects." Dutifully, the aging Victoria announced that she would rather not be queen than "remain the Sovereign of a country that is letting itself down to kiss the feet of the great barbarians, the readers of liberty and civilization that exists." Victoria herself had just been declared Empress of India. The last Indian resistance had been crushed in 1857, hundreds of thousands massacred, the last Mogul Emperor, poet Bahadur Shah, was imprisoned for life in Burma, while 18 princes of his family, including his 80 year old brother Mira Babul, were hanged in a Delhi public square, their bodies left hanging to rot. This did not make Britain to be "readers of liberty" because the British wrote the history books used everywhere!<sup>60</sup>

Gladstone and Disraeli behaved like "good cop, bad cop", one with open hate for Turkey, the other with compassion, but both had the same objective.

As an ardent political foe of Gladstone, the Liberal, with whom he alternated as Prime Minister, Disraeli opposed Gladstone's extremism regarding Turkey. In Parliament he argued for Turkey's survival for the present, i.e., British interests were seriously involved in all areas of the Ottoman State, and Russian occupation would seriously endanger those interests. Disraeli was the voice of reason on Bulgaria. He criticized the hysteria in the British press in ignoring the massacre of the Muslims which had led to the Bulgarian massacre of the Christians, in greatly exaggerating the Bulgarian massacre which had now been proven to have involved less than half the number first claimed by the newspapers. He condemned the "coffee-house babble", argued that the matter was now in the past, and (as Kinross puts it) "a side issue in the wider perspective of the Eastern Question as a whole." Disraeli labeled Gladstone "unpatriotic" as *Gladstone could upset the dethroned yet still powerful Muslim aristocracy and the vast Muslim population which comprised the British Empire.*

In reality, Gladstone's open bigotry had a political motive. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, who (as we have seen) had seduced Sultans and Grand Vizirs with his "friendship", and had induced them to make vital decisions for so long against Turkey's true interests, now supported Gladstone, "voicing sympathy with Gladstone, favored the extension of British protective influence beyond Bulgaria to cover oppressed Ottoman [Christian] subjects in all parts of the Balkans."<sup>61</sup>

So the British government now officially demanded from Turkey, through its Foreign Secretary Lord Derby, the punishment of all those involved in the

Bulgarian massacre, and while he "deplicated the Gastonia conception of a crusade to turn the Turks out of Europe, Derby told Russia that the British were [mainly] concerned that any war with Turkey would endanger British interests in that area, especially in Egypt and the Suez canal. This to the Tsar was a clear indication that Britain would not interfere with Russian action against the Porte elsewhere"<sup>62</sup> (italics added). Britain's intent was clear: it did not wish to destroy the Turkish state (for the present) just weaken it further and abort any chance of its resurgence into a healthy entity. Knowing now that his treaties with the West were worthless, the Sultan desperately tried to avoid the Russian invasion by making further concessions.

The Russian invasion, however, came anyway in the last week of April 1877. One Russian contingent invaded from Europe across the Pruth, the other invaded in Asia from the Caucasus. The Tsar Alexander grandly led his forces into Rumania, which hoped to become a large independent state as Serbia now claimed it was already, with Russian assistance. Seeking similar goals, Moldavia and Wallachia joined Russia and also declared war on Turkey. Collectively they conducted raids into the Marital Valley, slaughtering the Muslim population there. But then the tide turned. Mehmet Ali, now governor of Crete and appointed Commander of the Ottoman forces in Europe, defeated the Russians and the Bulgarians in a pitched battle. Osman Pasha, (the Crimea War veteran) routed the much larger invading forces on the first day of the siege of Plevna. The second assault on the fortress by the Russians and the Rumanians with even larger forces also met with defeat. Now the invading forces decided "to encircle the fortress and thus starve out the Turkish garrison."<sup>63</sup>

The British press did report these courageous Turkish victories despite being outnumbered. It led to a temporary change in British public opinion. All across Europe, in fact, Osman Pasha's courageous defense "captured the imagination of Europe, reversing the current barbarous image of the Turk to glorify him [now] as a brave fighter of the bulldog breed, and turning back the scales of public opinion in favour of the Ottoman Empire"<sup>64</sup> [italics added]. To Britain, courage and victory in battle apparently defined people, separated "civilized" from "barbarous."

This dramatic change in European opinion sent Sultan Abdul Aziz into ecstasy. Unfortunately it also caused him to seek greater examples of courage from his forces, promising Osman a powerful new army while ordering him to continue the defense of Plevna at all costs. It was a fatal move. The new army never came, but winter did, the Turkish forces were first starved by the Russian and Rumanian forces who now surrounded them on all sides, and then systematically massacred them. "The more seriously wounded [Turks] were left behind in their camp hospitals, only to be atrociously butchered by the Bulgarians."<sup>65</sup>

With this massacre in Plevna at the end of 1877 and its surrender, more than a hundred thousand Russian troops who had been assembled in those five months were now free to advance against the Turks in other parts. One large force attacked and captured Sophia, another entered Adrianople and advanced towards Istanbul. Noting the victories of the Russians, the Serbs (who had just before the Russian

invasion, signed a peace treaty with Turkey) now decided they had much more to gain by ignoring that treaty. They declared war on Turkey once again. They captured Nish; the Montenegrins captured much of Hercegovina; Slavs everywhere were on a rampage of conquests. This tempted the Greeks who sought insurrections in Greek-inhabited parts of the Turkish empire, including Crete, forcing even greater diffusion of Turkey's already depleted forces, and Russia was able to easily crush and devastate portions of Turkey's Asian empire, including much of Armenia.

In the meanwhile, "from Adrianople the Russian army of the Grand Duke Nicholas, with no effective Turkish force to oppose him, marched onward in the direction of Istanbul, creating panic in the city itself."<sup>66</sup> To add to the capital's problems, hundreds of thousands of refugees were pouring into the city, fleeing massacres by the invaders as they conquered towns and villages in Ottoman Europe. "Men, women and children, sick, frostbitten, and dying of starvation, they fled through the snows in the path of the advancing Russians, five thousand of them crowding for succour into the mosque of Abu Sofya alone." The Porte frantically appealed now to the European powers for help, under the 1871 Treaty which promised the defense of Turkish territorial integrity. The appeal was ignored. "The Porte became especially bitter against the British for their refusal of support, and the palace-controlled press caricatured the British as 'cowards'" A desperate Sultan Abdul Hamid even sent a personal telegram to Queen Victoria! Needless to add, this too was ignored.<sup>67</sup>

The Russians entered the village of San Stefano, just ten miles from Istanbul. Russia agreed periodically to an "armistice" with every new concession by the Turks, but then just ignored the armistice and continued with their conquests. Disraeli (now Lord Beaconsfield) said these Russian "armistice" agreements were "comedy" and did nothing to help the Turks.

But soon the British were concerned. Disraeli told Parliament that British interests were in jeopardy if Russia succeeded in capturing Istanbul. What did finally cause Britain to act was not any concern for the survival of the populace of the Turkey, but those financial fears. As the Russians moved almost into Istanbul, the London stock market crashed from near-panic at the imminent collapse of the Turkish empire and consequent disaster for British interests in the region. So now Parliament immediately voted to place the British armed forces on a war footing. The naval force was sent to the Sea of Marmara "to protect British life and property."<sup>68</sup> Preparations were made for a military landing in Gallipolis. And, with panic of loss to British interests if the entire Ottoman Empire fell to the Russians, the British press and, consequently, public opinion in London now swung to favor the Turks and to the jingoism of the Crimean War. Russia realized that it could not proceed farther if the British were going to be involved, and decided to delay on enforcing its claim of "the legitimate successor of those who had reigned on the Bosphorus." The Tsar cabled the Sultan assuring him that Russia would not invade Istanbul, and was willing to agree to a genuine armistice and a peace treaty.

The hapless Sultan signed the treaty on March 3, 1878 with Russia at San Stephano, through which "Russia planned the virtual dismemberment of the Ottoman



Empire in Europe. It was a plan exclusively in the interests of its Slavonic [people] and *against* those of the other populations, *Christian and Muslims*. It provided for two large Balkan states, both predominantly Slav, both now to be declared fully independent and freed from all tribute to the Sultan. One was Montenegro, which was to be trebled in size...the other, with enlarged territories...was Serbia. Bosnia and Hercegovina were to remain subject to the Sultan, but with autonomous institutions." Rumania was also rewarded for its support of Russia with its independence. Bulgaria was to be rewarded for its participation in the Russian invasion so that it was now "to be enlarged to such a scale as to restore in effect the Bulgarian empire of the Middle Ages...As an autonomous state, still nominally subject to the sultan's suzerainty, the new Bulgaria was to be under the rule of a prince selected by Russia, and with a Russianized administration. What remained of Turkey in Europe would thus be divided into two separate parts, *with a Bulgarian barrier between its two principal cities*."<sup>69</sup>

Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield) had been "amused" that Russia had sought an "armistice" with the Turks when Russia faced defeat, then it had surprised Turkey by suddenly attacking it. But these victories had made Russia very powerful over Eastern Europe and this was not amusing to Disraeli. "We therefore protest against an arrangement which practically would place at the command of Russia, and *Russia alone*, that unrivalled situation and the resources which the *European Powers* placed under the governance of the Porte."<sup>70</sup> he said. Note that the protest was not against Russia's invasion and conquest *breaking specific guarantees signed in 1871*, but against Russia winning the fruits of its victory to the exclusion of Britain.

Now Disraeli spearheaded changes to the Treaty of San Stefano, whereby portions of Anatolia which the Russians had appropriated into a larger Armenia, be returned to Turkey. As payment for supporting Turkish rights in this small matter, Britain demanded in a secret deal with the Ottomans, that Britain would be allowed in effect to "occupy and administer" the island of Cyprus, reports Mansfield, which Disraeli told his British colleagues was "the *key to western Asia*."<sup>71</sup>

When this "secret deal" became known, France objected to this increase in Britain's power. Britain placated the French, says Mansfield, by *agreeing to look the other way if France took Tunisia*. Three years later, France invaded Tunisia and declared it a "French Protectorate." In turn, *France looked the other way when Britain invaded and occupied Egypt*.<sup>72</sup>

### ( 8 )

The Muslim population in the Balkans were now consistently under brutal assault, and they were convinced the Ottoman sultan, too afraid of being accused of siding with Muslims, would do nothing. In desperation, "The Balkan Moslems appealed for justice to Queen Victoria, as the empress of a hundred million Moslem subjects. The Albanians formed a league to 'resist until death' any attempt on their lands. In this atmosphere the Tsar changed his mind...modified his original plans for a 'Greater Bulgaria'. The Britain was now very keen to win Greek favor, and warned

Russia it was 'prepared to exert all its influence to prevent the absorption into a Slav state of any Greek population'. The European powers met in Berlin in 1878 under the chairmanship of Bismarck, and the Treaty of Berlin signed within a month nullified the Treaty of San Stefano."<sup>73</sup> Plans for a "Greater Bulgaria" were dropped; Bulgaria would now be two states. The northern state would have political autonomy ruled by a prince *but not of the ruling dynasty* (which was aligned with Turkey), Turkey would have suzerainty over this new state. Southern Bulgaria (now called Eastern Rumelia) would continue to be ruled by Turkey "under the direct political and military authority of the Sultan."<sup>74</sup>

And "this check to Russian encroachment in the eastern Balkans was matched in the west by the increased power of Austria-Hungary, through her occupation and administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This action in effect legitimized the secret agreement made between Russia and Austria-Hungary giving the latter these territories in exchange for its support for Russia's ambitions on the Dardenelles. *And it brought under Christian governance the large Muslim population of Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Greece, at Britain's insistence, received some additional frontier adjustments near Epirus and Thessaly; Macedonia however was to remain under Turkey as well as Crete, Albania, Thrace and most of Epirus"<sup>75</sup> (italics added).

The Muslims of the Balkans were therefore deliberately denied the right to self-government, yet the Treaty of Berlin was broadcast around the world as providing '*Balkans for the Balkan peoples*'. The Serbs understood this as being a clear declaration of the Christian powers that the Slav Muslims were to be ignored, to have no voice as an entity. This gave an impetus to the Serbian hunger for a Serbian state with as much territory as they could capture.

The Slav Muslims of Bosnia-Hercegovina were in despair. They were, after all, descendants of the old Slavic nobility, the old upper class. They had sought independence from the Turks over the centuries. So why did they have to be governed by Austrian rule? Gradually it dawned on them that a rationale was being developed based for this blatant act of injustice. Everyone had known through the centuries that the Bosnians were not only pure Slavs but included much of the oldest aristocracies in the Balkans. But in recent times rumors were spread that they were possibly Turks. *Why else, the rumor said, would they be Muslims?* When Sir Arthur Evans went on his two lengthy visits to Bosnia-Hercegovina in the 1870s, he wrote "Nothing is more liable to confuse the questions at issue than to look on the Mussulman inhabitants of Bosnia and the Herzegovina as *Turks...the Mohametan* [sic] inhabitants of Bosnia and the Herzegovina are of the same race as their Christian neighbours...and can trace their title-deeds as far...The great Bosnian lords, now calling themselves Begs or Capetans, resided still in the feudal castles reared by their Christian ancestors; they kept their old escutcheons, their Slavonic family names, their rolls and patents of nobility inherited from Christian Kings."<sup>76</sup> And what of the Bosnian Christians? They would have accepted the rule of Bosnian Muslims. *They had even preferred Turkish rule to Christian kings*. Evans says "The Protestant population of Bosnia...preferred the domination of what it believed to be the *more tolerant Turks to the ferocious tyranny of Catholic*

kings, magnates and monks. There never was a clearer instance of the Nemesis which follows on the heels of religious persecution...let an European guarantee secure to the Mohametans of Bosnia the free exercise of their religion and complete equality before the law, and half the battle of conciliation will have been won. But...once encourage the hopes of Christian bigotry and the fears of Islam and the miserable struggle will prolong itself to the bitter end."<sup>77</sup> Evans pleaded in vain. It would be the victims, the Bosnian Muslims, who would pay in rivers of blood.

## (9)

The Treaty of Berlin also adjusted Turkish boundaries in Asia. Turkey got Bayezid back from Russia. "Batium though 'occupied' by the Russians, was to become a free port."<sup>78</sup> Turkey had to lose some territories to Russia in Asia, including a part of Armenia. As brokerage fee, Britain extracted a secret promise from Turkey, that Britain could "occupy and administer the island of Cyprus, paying to the Sultan in return an annual tribute from its surplus revenues." And in Asia, Britain also convinced Turkey that it needed British forces to defend "the Sultan's remaining Asiatic dominions against further Russian attack."<sup>79</sup>

Sultan Abdul Hamid sought to soothe his bruised ego at his subservience to the European powers, by crushing demands at home for the implementation of the new Constitution. He removed Midhat Pasha as Grand Vezir, banished him to Italy (he was brought back later, to be tried and sentenced to death as a traitor in the pay of Europeans). Abdul Hamid did, however, call a general election and following this election the first Ottoman Parliament met in March 1877, a Senate of 25 and a Chamber of 120 deputies comprising "Christians and Jews, Turks and Arabs, giving a voice to all sections of the community, even if not in proportion to their numbers."<sup>80</sup>

The Deputies however demanded the presence of some ministers to answer the Chamber on face evidence of corruption. Instead the Sultan dissolved the assembly after it had been in session for only three months. Six months later, on December 13, 1877, the assembly was recalled and the Sultan in a plea to Parliament asked the representatives to help him and "protect with me, our legitimate rights" against foreign domination. Then came the armistice of Jan 31 1878, with terms brutally punishing Turkey but which the Sultan told the Chamber he was forced to sign "owing to the country's abandonment by Europe."<sup>81</sup> But now "hostile deputies spoke up again" says Kinross, demanding three ministers be brought before them to answer questions. Mansfield admits that *these three ministers were suspected of being in the pay of Britain and France*, and Parliament demanded that if foreign yoke was to be removed, these ministers must be questioned. "This time the Sultan prorogued Parliament indefinitely. It was not to meet again for thirty years."<sup>82</sup> Clearly the Sultan feared these ministers might reveal details of his own current secret dealings with European powers.

The Sultan soon ensured that the Young Ottomans vanished from the public scene. Many were exiled as an "army of spies" for the West. Several went to

Europe and became fierce critics of Turkey. The Sultan told senators and deputies that he had learned the hard way that "*it is only by force that one can move the people with whose protection God has entrusted me.*"<sup>83</sup> In an interview with a European correspondent he insisted he was for reform "but the excess of liberty to which one is unaccustomed is as dangerous as the absence of a liberty".

## (10)

In some ways Sultan Abdul Hamid, destined to be the last sultan to actually rule, was one of the most enigmatic and tragic sultans of the dynasty. By this time it had become clear to the meanest intelligence that the almost childlike trust which some of his predecessors had placed in the British, destroyed Turkey.

Abdul Hamid was convinced that he had enemies within his empire and agents of the European powers who wished to kill him. He became paranoid, to the point, says Mansfield, of extracting his own teeth and preparing his own medicines.<sup>84</sup> He attempted reform on his own style, especially in the field of public education. He even tried what was now the extremely difficult task of seeking a curricula for education of Turkish students without European domination. However his own plans were impeded by the fact that, once again, he had a Grand Vezir, Mehmed Said Pasha, who was completely dominated by the British. But Abdul Hamid continued to be highly concerned about foreign and internal enemies. Aside from education, there was the foreign-dominated media. He foolishly tried censorship, but that only got him severely criticized.

By now "The foreign communities [within Turkey] were not only privileged and protected; *they were virtually above the law.* The European powers argued that, in spite of the reforms introduced in 1869, the Ottoman legal system was in no way suitable to be applied to their nationals in the empire,"<sup>85</sup> writes Mansfield. As a result, wild and extreme corruption and illegalities, political and commercial, could be practiced by Europeans with no fear of retribution.

Because he was so fearful of the Europeans, Abdul Hamid sought to appease them even while he attempted to reduce their control. New laws and regulations were set up to satisfy Europeans in any dispute with Muslims in the empire. "The European powers brusquely refused [this concession]. He was convinced that foreign agents would now be sent to kill him *because he had announced a return to Islam* He set about creating a veritable fortress around himself; he demolished buildings and build Yildiz Palace, a new Seraglio, less opulent than the European-style Dolma Palace, but with the best security arrangement he could muster. Despite these precautions, there was a break-in and an attempt on his life. The plot failed, but it convinced Abdul Hamid that European powers were behind it. When British ambassador Henry Layard came to see him at the palace, *Abdul Hamid became convinced... that he was to be borne off to a British warship and disposed of, so that [the more pliable] Murad might ascend the throne.* Sir Henry Layard, as he recounts, found the Sultan cowering with a look of terror in a corner of his large hall, with his army bodyguard at hand."<sup>86</sup>



He worked hard, reportedly became a practicing Muslim either sincerely or because he realized that the Muslim world might be his last line of defense against the Christian West. He developed the use of the telegraph, which had been extended since the Crimean War all across the empire through a French contractor. He set up a Ministry of Posts and Telegraph, and schools for training operators. Soon the telegraph became his chief mode of communication directly with the bureaucracy. But while deeply suspicious of the West, Abdul Hamid saw the value of modernization and education. He continued with expanding facilities for public education, greatly expanded the *Mektebs*, the center for higher civil education. The University of Istanbul commenced to function. And he expanded the military college, in addition to the higher education and professional colleges, including training colleges for teachers. The *Galatasaray* became a truly elite school for the upper classes (on the line of France's *Lycee*). Much of this had been planned under the *Tanzimat*, but Abdul Hamid made them realities. And he encouraged the creation of more Turkish newspapers and magazines, to counter those under foreign domination.

European lenders were furious when he attempted to curb the Capitulation favors they enjoyed and they successfully fought off his attempts to bring foreign trade under Turkish law. As we have noted, from the time of the first Capitulation agreement made by Suleiman, foreign businesses were not subject to Turkish law. Now with the Treaty of Berlin, the European powers had made it clear that the national debt owed by Turkey provided them the right to direct Turkey's policies in critical ways. They had set up an International Financial Commission in Istanbul to oversee Turkey's compliance with their directives, which Abdul Hamid found abhorrent, but had to accept in view of the empire's financial problems. He did work out an agreement with Europe, announced as the Decree of Muharram in 1881, whereby the national debt was reduced to "somewhat more than one hundred million pounds."<sup>87</sup> In return, Turkey had to agree that the lenders' commission would receive a "large part of the government's annual revenue" as well as the annual usurious interest on the debt. European powers were also to have certain monopolies such as those on salt and tobacco. For the next forty years, "the Turks, with their traditional respect for institutions, showed themselves ready to abide" and made payments even though it placed enormous strains on the government and its people.<sup>88</sup>

Western historians usually claim that under the Council of Public Debt set up by the European lenders, Turkey's economy improved. However, they seldom add, but Kinross does, that this improvement was "largely to the foreigners' benefit".

The American Civil War was to create a new and large market - at least temporarily - for Turkish and Egyptian cotton. But Turkish farmers suffered through new land and property laws that heavily favored foreigners, especially after 1867 when foreigners were granted the rights to own property entirely free of Turkish laws. While demanding and obtaining these concessions, "the European insisted on retaining their rights to immunity from police interference or the payment of Ottoman taxes."<sup>89</sup>

## (11)

Egypt's problems were identical to those facing the Porte. Muhammad Ali had given European powers a great deal of freedom and the Egyptian economy was in tatters. "The foreign entrepreneurs who were responsible for so much new development made little contribution to Egyptian revenues; under the protection of the Capitulations, they paid virtually no taxes" writes Mansfield. Huge estates and foreign corporations flourished, but the small Egyptian farmer "actually lost control over lands that their families had farmed for generations."<sup>91</sup>

Khedive Abbas (1844-1854) who succeeded Muhammad Ali did not like his grandfather's obsession with the French. He questioned foreign domination, but was unable to resist British influence, says Mansfield. Egypt had to suffer huge debts for projects such as the Cairo-Alexandria railway that the British built in 1850-51. Then Abbas was murdered and a very pro-European, his uncle Said, took over as khedive until 1863. Said started new public projects, dams, railways, canals, but he turned to the British to borrow and received loans at outrageous terms. His European leanings included the French, and one positive result of this was his friendship with Ferdinand de Lesseps, the son of a "political agent" which got the Suez Canal constructed. Centuries back, Turkey's Grand Vizier Fazil Koprulu had first thought of such a canal; Napoleon had then come up with the idea, but engineers of his time as well said it was impossible. "Britain still opposed the scheme," reports Mansfield. Palmerston preferred instead the extension of the Cairo-Alexandria railway to Suez.<sup>92</sup>

The terms which de Lesseps extracted from Said were ruinous for the Egyptian economy, Mansfield reports that Egypt had to provide 20,000 laborers per year, pay for all ancillary work and give up rights to both banks along the entire canal. Then, as 50% of the shares remained unsold, de Lesseps (and Napoleon II's regime) persuaded Said to buy them all. Work began April 1859.<sup>93</sup> Halfway through completion, Said died, and was succeeded by Esmail, grandson of Mehmet Ali, the son of Ibrahim Pasha. The Canal was completed in 1869. For the opening ceremonies, Esmail was a lavish host to Empress Eugenie and other European royalty.

Britain planned its own strategy. It had persuaded the sultan to maintain his right of veto over the entire Canal project. By now Emperor Napoleon III's arbitrators had decided that Esmail must pay 130 million francs to France to give up its rights to land, navigation and free labor under the original agreement with de Lesseps. The sultan agreed to this, but this was the final straw to Egypt's ravaged economy, on the brink of insolvency. Esmail wryly commented "My country no longer belongs to Africa: it is part of Europe."<sup>94</sup> By 1876, when the Ottoman sultan declared bankruptcy, Egypt's national debt was £ 100,000,000, exactly the same amount the European lenders demanded as due from the Ottoman treasury as well. The Canal of course was a brilliant project and was to help the Egyptian economy over future years, but for the present, despite the boom in cotton exports (as in the Ottoman empire generally, because the American Civil War had created a temporary

surge in American import of cotton, Egypt's primary produce) it had crushed the Egyptian treasury. Within five years after Esmail had paid a huge price for the Canal he and Said had paid, Egypt had to borrow 25 million pounds sterling at even more usurious rates, up to 26%, says Mansfield (ibid). Incredibly, he was able to get the Ottoman Sultan to agree that his own progeny were to be "khedives" of Egypt, not those the eldest male of the house of his grandfather Mehmet Ali, as previously arranged. He also received the right to raise loans without reference to the Sultan. This pleased European powers who were keen to make Egypt an independent debtor within the Turkish nation.

By 1875, Britain's stranglehold over the Egyptian economy was complete and Britain now prevailed upon Esmail to sell 44% of the Suez Company to Britain for a measly *four million pounds sterling*<sup>65</sup>. Disraeli, who had supported Palmerston and had opposed the building of the Canal, was now suddenly in favor of the Canal; while the French had received the concession to build the Canal, Britain stood to profit hugely from it. The ridiculously low price paid by Britain (or more correctly by Baron Rothschild, who financed the transaction for Britain) did not really reduce Egypt's huge debt. And so, just eight months after the Ottoman Empire had declared bankruptcy, Egypt was forced to declare bankruptcy in April 1876.

### ( 12 )

Just as the Sultan had been forced to do when Turkey's treasury was crumbling, Esmail received more European loans to pay his huge debts. With the Suez Canal now adding greatly to Britain's profits in the trade route to India, the British and the French sent what they suggested were concerned missions to Egypt. Between them, the Council of Public Debt (*Caisse de la Dette*) was formed, arranging that Egypt's total debt must be repaid at a relatively low interest of 7%. This new loan was at a much lower rate than before than the huge rate charged to Turkey *they demanded that more taxes must be imposed on the people, an early incarnation of IMF control*. And they ordered that Esmail, the khedive, would now be a nominal head. A cabinet must be appointed to rule Egypt. The Cabinet appointed consisted of an *Armenian Prime Minister, a British Minister of Finance and a French Minister of Public Works*.<sup>66</sup>

The public, suffocating under the new taxes, was furious. The unpaid military formed the Egyptian National Party. It finally dawned on Esmail that he had been used by his European "friends". He showed some firmness now. He dismissed the Armenian Prime Minister Nubar Pasha who had proved wholly incompetent, and replaced him with Serif Pasha, who was for constitutional government. In 1879, he tried to dismiss the self-appointed British and French ministers of the Cabinet. Recognizing that Esmail was no longer the lapdog he had been, the British and French governments "officially advised him" to abdicate and to leave Egypt.<sup>67</sup> When he refused, they used their influence over Sultan Abdul Hamid's Minister of Foreign Affairs Caratheodari (a Greek) in Istanbul to persuade the Sultan to remove Esmail. Abdul Hamid refused, but Caratheodari warned him not to resist Europe's

wishes. So the Sultan agreed, replacing Esmail with Esmail's young son Tewfik. Tewfik lived up to European expectations. He was willing to carry out all their instructions. Public indignation grew. Then Jamal al-Din al-Afghani appeared.

### ( 13 )

Afghani was reported to be of Afghan/Iranian/Egyptian ancestry, who called for the restoration of Islamic principles, freedom from Christian-European exploitation. He was as critical of Egyptian khedives as of the Ottoman sultans who had sold out Muslim lands and their economic prosperity. He called for a constitutional government. He had commenced his campaign in Turkey, the European powers had got him banished and he had come to Egypt in 1871. Support for him in Egypt was growing very fast, causing considerable anxiety to the Europeans. Under Anglo-French direction, Tewfik now banished Afghani. He was allowed entry to Paris, from where he could be watched as he tried to communicate through a journal. But of course that was not the same as being present and speaking.

The colonialists found it easy to control one branch of Egypt's nationalist movement. This was the rich. They included a few of the corrupt *Ulema* who, as in Turkey, were willing to rule according to foreign dictates. Many of the rich were now angry at foreign exploitation. But these property owners did not want a radical uprising that might destroy their own assets. Even so, some of this upper class gave the Afghani movement support, even from a distance.

But the third element, the angry officers of the army, was a lot harder for Britain and France to control. Colonel Ahmed Arabi had risen from the ranks to become their leader and had public support. War Minister Osman Rifky was ordered to arrest him and his colleagues, but the opposition was so powerful that Rifky himself had to be sacked instead, to appease the army. The army's anger was so great that even the London Times (September 12, 1881), admitted with unusual candor: "The army, we must remember, is the only native institution which Egypt now owns. *All else has been invaded and controlled and transformed by the accredited representatives of France and England*."<sup>68</sup>

Though Afghani's influence was lessened by his banishment, it was still considerable through Afghani's disciple Sheikh Muhammad Abduh and his group. European representatives told Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid that Arabi was a traitor who was trying to separate Egypt and Arabia from the empire, but by now Sultan Abdul Hamid was somewhat less naive than he had been, and he wrote to Arabi not to let anything worry him, but to continue with his task of defending Egypt against invaders. It did not help, of course. Seeking to make full use of their opportunities, the colonialists moved almost as a Cartel to take Muslim lands. *Britain took possession of Egypt in 1882 "Algeria and Tunisia went to the French in 1880 and 1881... Tripoli was seized by the Italians in 1912"*.<sup>69</sup>

Outrage at foreign domination continued to grow in Egypt. Demands grew for the removal of the suffocating taxes. The Egyptian army, backed by the public, demanded the removal of European leadership of the armed forces.



Britain, though deep in its backyard colonial problems in Ireland, decided that military action was necessary to bring the Egyptian "slaves" under control. A joint British-French naval force was sent to Alexandria, threatening invasion. But the passions of nationalism and religious sentiments were now very high in Egypt. Attempts to repress them in Alexandria through the Anglo-French officials and their retinue resulted in riots, which were ruthlessly suppressed; thousands of Egyptians were killed. *But fifty Europeans were also reported to have died and this greatly angered London.* Britain now wanted to take military control of the Suez Canal, but France refused to permit this, causing the British to suspect that the French wished to make a separate deal with Egypt. This suspicion was further strengthened when Britain ordered the nationalists on July 19, 1882, to dismantle the fortifications the army was building for the defense of Alexandria. Again, France refused to go along with this ultimatum. Britain's Parliament, however, decided military action was essential, that "the seat of the disease is in the interior of Egypt, in its disturbed and its anarchical condition."<sup>106</sup> In today's language the disease is the "radical Muslim fundamentalists."

British fleet bombarded Alexandria for ten hours, reducing it to ruins. "The French refused to take part in the bombardment, and withdrew their naval force soon afterwards" reports Mansfield. Britain looked for some form of legitimacy for its military invasion, asked the Sultan in Istanbul to overthrow Arabi and crush his rebellious army. But this time the Sultan Abdul Majid was not so easy to manipulate. So the British proceeded with their invasion on their own, despite growing criticism from France and Russia, who were of course not concerned so much for the Egyptians but because this British invasion would provide it with even greater colonial power. Prime Minister Gladstone announced the continuing invasion as action "to convert the present state of Egypt from anarchy and conflict to peace and order." On September 13, 1882, a huge British force invaded Ismailia, Egypt.

Colonel Ahmed Arabi, with extraordinary naiveté, still did not believe that the British would actually do something so barbaric as to invade and occupy Egypt using as excuse those Canal shares they had duped from Egypt at such a ridiculous price. In fact, it is reported by Mansfield that this peculiar "radical" believed that *the British would respect the neutrality of the Suez Canal!* Arabi, it seems, had been assured by the now elderly de Lesseps that Britain would never go that far. So now, in Ismailia, the unprepared Egyptian forces were taken completely by surprise when British warships came and closed the Canal. Arabi's forces were routed. On September 13, 1882, ten thousand Egyptians were killed versus 57 British dead. It was hailed as one of British Infantry's great victory, if not the greatest "in any period of our military history."<sup>107</sup> British troops entered Cairo and became the occupying force. Arabi and other army officers surrendered. Arabi was banished to the British colony of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). He was never allowed to set foot in Egypt again.

France and even Russia, very concerned at Britain's new colonial possession, joined Turkey in demanding Britain's withdrawal. Britain knew it had to find some way to justify what it insisted was "temporary occupation." When that had dragged

on for five years, and criticism kept growing among other colonial powers, Britain tried in 1887 to get the Ottoman Sultan to sign a Convention so that the British occupation would be legitimized as necessary because of "serious internal and external danger to Egypt." France and Germany advised the Sultan not to sign this agreement. Britain continued to make public statements about how reluctant it was to stay in Egypt and only sought to leave as soon as possible. "Undoubtedly, of all things in the world, that [continued occupation] is a thing we are not going to do!"<sup>108</sup> Gladstone told Parliament with a straight face. Lord Dufferin was sent to Egypt, returning to say that Egypt could not be governed from a distance from London; the charade for public consumption was played out in the British press, and it undoubtedly convinced most of the British public among others, including some historians, that Egypt was seeking ways to end its occupation. Attempts to secure British withdrawal by Turkey, France and Russia over the next five years, however, came to nothing. The net result of British occupation was clear after the first two decades: "After 24 years of Cromerism [rule by Britain's Lord Cromer], 80 percent of those who owned land in Egypt possessed less than 25 percent of the whole, while at the other end of the scale 1 percent owned 40 percent of the whole."<sup>109</sup> Britain was to occupy Egypt for seventy-four years, all the way into the Second World War, when Britain, on the brink of defeat, desperately needed Egyptian and other Arab troops to fight the war. So it pleaded, begged, for Egypt's help in the War, and solemnly promised independence after the War to all the Muslim lands it controlled.

In 1883, after Dufferin was removed, the notorious Evelyn Baring had been sent to Egypt from India as "British agent" Baring (nicknamed 'over-Baring' for his arrogance), soon to be made Lord Cromer, ruled Egypt for twenty-four years. He calmly announced that the Egyptians were not capable of governing themselves, they were a natural "subject race" while the British were a "governing race"! Of course if the Egyptians rejected Islam and embraced Christianity, they stood a chance of becoming less barbaric; later, he explained that if Islam were modernized on the lines he wanted, it would be "Islam no longer." (ibid)

At this stage Britain still believed a very weak Turkey, with all the benefits which Britain obtained from it, was necessary to keep alive, to guard against Russian ambitions in the Eastern Mediterranean. But with the huge treasures from India, the "Jewel in the Crown", priority had to be given to the survival of Egypt over Turkey as it was on the route to India through the Suez. With growing criticism from France who resented Britain *unilateral* military occupation of Egypt, Britain agreed in 1887 to withdraw its forces, but insisted on a provision in the Anglo-Turkish Convention that British military had the *right* to return any time if it felt British interests were threatened. But British rule remained. Gradually, Egypt became, *ipso facto*, part of the British Empire; "It was not colored red on the map, but every British schoolboy somehow perceived that it was."<sup>110</sup> Officially Britain could not annex it, because this might start a war with France. Then, in 1904, Britain and France entered into *Entente Cordiale*, quietly settling differences and agreements on which parts of Asia and Africa the two could grab and keep. Britain

had agreed not to interfere when France took Tunisia. This understanding held so well, in fact, that it became the root for the alliance between the two (and Russia) against Germany, leading to World War I. *In the meanwhile, Britain rule of Egypt was now what her Lord Milner admitted was a "Veiled Protectorate", keeping the khedive and his cabinet as fronts for British rule.*

Egypt's agricultural produce was increased with irrigation because Egyptian produce and cotton were very profitable for British industry. As in other colonies, the finished product was exported back to Egypt. *They imposed heavy duties on Egypt's small industries "to equalize their prices with those of foreign imports. This virtually wiped out the Egyptian tobacco industry."*<sup>103</sup> The resultant profits in the Egyptian economy did not result in any material gains for its people, as "Egypt's commitments to repay Ismail's debts absorbed more than half its revenues."<sup>106</sup>

## ( 14 )

With Egypt now virtually a British colony, tourism from Britain was on the increase to what was *ipso facto* its new colony, and would increase a lot more with the archaeological finds in early twentieth century. Archeology was becoming a major undertaking now, especially after the huge treasures found by one Heinrich Schliemann, a German-American adventurer who, after searching for gold during the Gold Rush in western US came to Turkey in about 1880s to explore the possibility of locating the city of Troy about which Homer had written. Schliemann was no scholar but using Turkey's respect for "the people of the Book", and Turkey's weakened status in the world, he employed labor to dig in the area where he felt the ancient city of Troy might be. Forcing the laborers to dig round the clock to rush his search (many died), he was himself amazed to find enormous amounts of gold, exquisite jewelry, and other ornaments; what has later been discovered and assessed in Russia (aside from what Schliemann and his Greek wife may have hidden and given to Greece) is said to be worth hundreds of billions of dollars. As soon as he realized he had found treasure, Schliemann instantly dismissed the laborers, conducted the final removal of the treasure, in stages, alone with his wife at night, threatened Turkish inspectors who were suspicious at his behavior and had tried to examine his tents, hid the entire treasure later in a remote area of Turkey, then transported everything in bags in stages at night over the next days and weeks to Greece; he later claimed he took all of it to Berlin, Germany from where after WW2, the Soviets took it to a museum in Moscow. Books have been written, there have been fierce arguments between Germany and Russia about who has the rights to "Schliemann's Gold" (even the British claim the Russians "stole" it from their area of Berlin after the War). No one really knows how much of the enormous treasure Schliemann and his wife kept for themselves or in Greece before cleverly "donating" the rest to the Museum in Germany. The Turks of course have protested but to no avail. *The irony is that it is a treasure that pre-dates Troy and is of such enormous proportions that Turkey could have once again become a very prosperous country if it could have been properly compensated for the theft.*

While any single treasure stolen from other Muslim and Asian lands may not equal the sheer wealth of this one theft, there have been very many such thefts by the colonialists and even by archeologists often worth fortunes. In addition to diamonds, jewelry, sculpture, paintings, there were ancient minarets of mosques from the Mogul era in India, which astounded the British. These minarets high in the sky could be moved when pushed without crashing down. When pressure was removed they returned to their original position. The British dismantled more than one minaret, sent them to London so experts might discover the secret. They never did, just disfigured the mosques, such as the ones in Ahmedabad. Such archeological finds in ancient lands were great scientific discoveries, but they were also treasures, which the British found irresistible and some Britons (and then Americans) banked on the claim that these finds belonged to "the international community", an almost *communistic claim*. Innumerable archeological objects, precious stones, jewelry were stolen, many placed in Western Museums, but many more taken for profit and sold.

By now the fire of national freedom had been effectively silenced. Even Sheikh Muhammad Abduh was allowed to return after he promised to work within the new regulations. Law and order, procedures in the law courts still followed French law were now firmly enforced by the British, often using French teachers until they could anglicize the system. Since 1863, when law had been steadily Europeanized in Egypt and then in all of the Ottoman Empire, *sharia* (Islamic) law, which had never been examined to update it, had been made steadily subversive so that by 1880 it remained only in matters of personal relations vaguely interpreted by local Qazis with no attempt to review, update. As in other British and French colonies, a standard form of Christian colonial law prevailed. This did not include rights and privileges. The entire Machiavellian concept of colonialism was to support and create a corrupt single ruler, supported by a handful of corrupt "advisors", preferably non-Muslims. *Democracy was a threat. Officially, of course, the colonial powers would naturally have to claim they were in favor of it.*

Now, in Egypt, the non-Muslim rich were wooed to help keep control over the rest. For the masses, only basic education was allowed, *not higher studies.* Lord Cromer explained that the "subject race" was incapable of absorbing more than that.<sup>107</sup> Mansfield reports that when Cromer had come to Egypt in 1873 the literacy level (measured as reading other than Arabic) was 1.7%. When he left, twenty-four years later, literacy had been sharply reduced to 1.5%, mainly because Cromer had quickly discontinued the policy introduced by Mehmet Ali and Ismail of free education schools and colleges. Cromer said it was a waste of money. He was not against "modernizing" Islam on the lines he wanted because "reformed Islam is Islam no longer."<sup>108</sup> And he was strongly opposed to the industrialization of Egypt. At the end of Cromer's reign, *one per cent of the population (foreign and the Egyptian large landowners) owned 40% of it, and 80% of those who had owned land in previous times held less than 25% of it.*<sup>109</sup> Cromer ordered Egypt to concentrate on producing cotton which was critical for the cotton mills in Britain.

In 1892 Khedive Tewfik died and his 17 yr. old son Abbas Hilmi succeeded him. The British felt he would be at least as pliable as Tewfik, as he had been



educated in England. But Abbas was critical of Cromer's choices of ministers, and of the British domination of the Egyptian army. Mansfield reports that *even the expenses of Britain's standing army had to be paid from the Egyptian treasury*. Abbas sought Sultan Abdul Hamid's support in his objective to reduce Britain's stranglehold on Egypt, but the Sultan was too nervous to take on the British on Egypt's behalf. Abbas' last hope was that the Gladstone Liberal Party, now again in power, would be more sympathetic to his own nationalistic aims. But Gladstone's foreign secretary, Lord Rosebery, was as much a colonialist as Cromer, and Abbas capitulated.

## ( 15 )

Cromer's policy of stern rule won even greater support in Britain after Sudan, under Muhammad ibn Abdullah 'the Mahdi' succeeded in overthrowing the British-led Egyptian force which had controlled Sudan for about sixty years; a General Gordon was sent to work the magic of British pre-eminent diplomacy on the 'Mahdi'. It did not work. The British sent a "relief expedition" (the Sudanese called it an invasion). Gordon was killed, while the British relief expedition succeeded in killing the 'Mahdi'. Yet Sudan came out of it all to enjoy a form of freedom for almost thirteen years, under the 'Mahdi's' successor, called the Khalifa.

The reconquest of Sudan soon became a priority for the British. Colonies had to be taught a lesson. Also there were new European powers competing in Africa. Italy had become a country after 1870, and it was also eager to colonize. It had entered Ethiopia, and was about to take control of the Upper Nile. Kitchener's army (with British officers but with Egyptian troops) advanced up the Nile, routed the Sudanese forces of the Mahdi near their capital Omdurman. Relying on the principle that the "inferior races" would obey if you were firm, and took prudent protections in terminology. Britain announced its "Veiled Protectorate" policy. Sudan, it said, was an Egyptian protectorate, not that of Britain. Therefore it was Egypt which appointed a governor-general now over Sudan. Britain ensured he was an *Englishman*!

## ( 16 )

Egypt's nationalist movement became more vocal. A youth named Mustafa Kamel, educated in Cairo and in France, was gaining prominence. *At this stage Kamel identified with the pan-Islamic movement*. But the nationalist movement no longer worried Cromer. He even announced he favored "freedom of the press". This was very safe. While nationalists like Kamel were involved in a small newspaper, the two leading newspapers were run by Christian Arabs so Muslim influence would remain minimal.

Sheikh Muhammad Abduh died in 1905, but his People's Party continued. And they were becoming suspicious of the "moderate" educated nationalists like Mustafa Kamel especially after another foreign-educated nationalist, Saad Zaghloul,

was made the head of the newly created education department. But then, in 1906, in a small Egyptian village of Denshawai, furious villagers attacked and killed a British shooting party. The British reaction was swift. Cromer called it "fanaticism", four of the suspects were hanged, seventeen more flogged then imprisoned. The villagers were compelled to watch the hanging and the flogging. A similar "example" was to be carried out in other countries, such as in 1911 in Amritsar, India where a large number of protesters were gunned down. About the same time, in Iran, the senior Ayatollahs (religious leaders) were hanged in a public square after a national revolt against British and Russian rule over the Shah, was crushed.

The Denshawai incident caused the Egyptian nationalist movement to gain strength. Cromer retired the following year, and was replaced by Eldon Gorst, a senior diplomat. He announced that "the consul-general [of Egypt] is ipso facto ruler of the country, without being hampered by a parliament or a network of councils like the Viceroy of India." But the national movement continued to grow. Gorst turned belligerent. The "free press" was shut down. And a Relegation Law allowed suspects to be imprisoned without trial. Then Gorst stated that Britain's 99-year concession over the Suez Canal, due to expire in 1968, must be extended for another 44 years. Even the docile elements of Egypt were now furious.<sup>110</sup>

Britain had appointed Boutros Ghali, (the recent Secretary-General of the United Nations is his grandson) a Coptic Christian, Prime Minister of Egypt. Mansfield reports that the Egyptian people believed this Boutros Ghali (the grandfather) was totally corrupt. He had presided over the Denshawai "trial" and Egyptians called him a "British stooge." When he was assassinated by a nationalist, the public saw that as act of heroism. When Britain insisted that Boutros Ghali's killer must be publicly executed. In London, Arthur Balfour, Opposition Leader, argued that the government had invited the assassination of this pro-British Egyptian *by being weak*. So great was the anger that Gorst was relieved of his duties in 1911. Lord Kitchener replaced Gorst. "He was soon entertaining visions of the annexation of Egypt to Britain with himself as the first viceroy of Egypt and Sudan. He shared the dreams of Cecil Rhodes — an Africa colored red on the map from Cairo to Cape."<sup>111</sup>

Kitchener "emasculated the role of the [Egyptian] khediv."<sup>112</sup> But then the Machiavellian intrigue and power play between cousin-monarchs of Europe led to their involvement in a War in which their colonial possessions were quickly drawn. From the start of World War I, Britain felt it should simply annex Egypt officially from the Ottoman Sultan. Then it decided this might be too blatant. Instead, the title of "Sultan of Egypt" was now given to Hussein, clearly to register him as a British vassal on an equal footing with the Ottoman sultan. When Hussein died, his brother Ahmed Faud succeeded and was given an even more grand title: "King of Egypt."

Egypt was still part of the Ottoman Empire, so obviously Egypt could not officially be made to fight the War against the Ottomans but Britain expected it to contribute to the war effort. In fact, 20,000 Egyptian soldiers served in France and in Palestine for the British against the Turks "and suffered heavy casualties"<sup>113</sup>. After the War, Britain felt that Egypt's nationalist movement would demand freedom

just as other Arab lands did. Its Muslim population had to be kept on a leash. To do this Britain should draw what Cromer had called the "Brahmins of Egypt" (those of Italian, Greek and Maltese descent) closer to the British.

Britain's "tried and true" policy of encouraging the hedonistic appetite of its chosen "ruler" (in this instance "King" Farouk) enabled the West to keep Egypt in control until 1952. Then Nasser's revolution overthrew the "monarchy" and Farouk ran off to Europe. But the loss was only temporary. Western control was restored after Nasser's death under Anwar Sadat. Boutros-Boutros Ghali was his advisor, friend, minister before he was selected the first African to be UN Secretary-General.

### ( 17 )

Sultan Abdul Hamid wished to extend the Turkish railway system until all the principal cities of the empire were linked by railway lines, as was Istanbul with Europe in 1888 with the first Istanbul-Vienna train, the forerunner of the Orient Express. This link with Europe of course was of particular value to the European businesses and industrialists now governing Turkey, just as the Suez Canal, engineered by the French was to serve, ironically, the British even more than the French and other European colonial powers.

Abdul Hamid "was especially bitter against Britain, who had betrayed him, as he saw it, by her refusal to support Turkey in the war [the Russian invasion ten years earlier]. It had reduced his state to bankruptcy and his own economic sovereignty to little more than a cipher, and whose consuls were continually interfering in the internal affairs of his empire."<sup>114</sup> And "he had a kind of horror of Mr. Gladstone" who had returned to power as the Liberal Party premier in 1880. In 1885, when the Tories returned to power, the British Ambassador to Turkey complained that British influence was at an all-time low, that British advice, so blindly sought and followed in the past was now "unheeded and even heard with ill-humour, if not with disdain."<sup>115</sup> In fact, the desperate Abdul Hamid even preferred Bismarck's Germany, even though there was the "Triple Alliance" of the Emperors of Germany, Austria and Russia. But Bismarck had expressed no interest in colonizing Turkey. So Turkey had invited Germany's officers to come, train and help modernize Turkey's armed forces.

In 1880, Abdul Hamid was still agonizing over the terms extracted from Turkey by the European powers under the Treaty of Berlin. Among many concessions, Montenegro was now to be deemed not just independent, but to have an Adriatic port. Abdul Hamid hesitated, fearing that this port would be used by the Russian naval forces to launch another invasion. Gladstone sent British naval ships to take not only Antivari but - as punishment - the port of Smyrna as well if the Sultan did not yield immediately. The Sultan yielded.

On the terms of ceding Thessaly and Epirus to Greece (a concession extracted from Turkey even though Greece had not been part of the victorious invading armies) the Sultan insisted that the terms did not include all of Epirus, but just the Christian part of it. He was allowed to keep the Muslim section of Epirus. Noting

Turkey's weakness, Northern Bulgaria, with its princeling Alexander of Battenberg, now attempted to turn the autonomy granted by Turkey to also absorb Southern Bulgaria. Then he demanded that his union should include the rich Bulgarian territory of Eastern Rumelia. Abdul Hamid attempted to win the Bulgarians over in several ways; the governor he sent to the territory, Gavril Pasha, was not only a Christian but directed to remove his Turkish *fez* hat and replace it with the Bulgarian *kalpak*! It did not help. Alexander arrived and formed an alliance with the Bulgarian peasant rebels, declaring it as part of the new union. The Turkish governor was mauled, dragged through the street, finally allowed to return to Turkey.

This annexation was clearly a breach of the Treaty of Berlin, but no European power sided with Turkey, and while Bulgaria fully expected the Sultan's forces to march against it, no armies came. Abdul Hamid, afraid of another international condemnation which media might have charged was "a repetition of the Bulgarian massacres...accepted the *fait accompli*, appointing Prince Alexander as governor of Eastern Rumelia for a five-year term, while from now onward the assemblies of the two states met as one body in Sofia."<sup>116</sup>

Now Serbia, noting how Bulgarian territories could be wrenched from Turkey, launched an attack to capture some of Bulgaria itself. The Serbian forces were soundly defeated by the Bulgarians, who not only drove the Serbs back into Serbia but marched to the Serbian capital of Belgrade when Austria came to Serbia's aid. Alexander withdrew, returned the lands it had captured in Serbia.

But this concession did not satisfy Russia, who felt they could impose their own authority upon the new state of Bulgaria on behalf of the Serbs. Russian forces were sent to Bulgaria, they "kidnapped the prince [Alexander], forced him to sign a document of abdication, and transported him across the Russian frontier."<sup>117</sup> However, the Bulgarian rebel leader Stambulov, who had formed an alliance with Alexander from the start, aroused public fury at this kidnapping. Russia finally set Alexander free. He returned from Russian captivity a terrified man, then "left Bulgaria, never to return."<sup>118</sup>

All of these wild, criminal actions by Bulgaria, Serbia and now Russia were being conducted on what was still, officially, Turkish territory, by the provisions of the Berlin Treaty. But again, Abdul Hamid decided he could not challenge these actions, knowing that European powers preferred a united Bulgaria, and would never aid Turkey in reclaiming any of its territories. "For the second time, Abdul Hamid had allowed his sovereign right of entry to go by default...His inaction...suited the Western powers, Britain included."<sup>119</sup>

This timidity of course invited more wild upheavals in Bulgaria. Stambulov now became virtually the local dictator. There were demands for elections to be conducted, which the Russians opposed. Amidst the general chaos, elections were finally conducted, followed by the selection of a new prince. In 1887, the Assembly chose as its prince, Ferdinand of Colberg. He was a cousin of Britain's Queen Victoria and of her husband Albert of Saxe-Colberg-Gotha. Britain's involvement in his selection was never admitted, but Britain quickly recognized him, while Russia did not. Turkey of course did not, as legally the territory was still part of



the Turkish State. Stambulov, a friend of the British became Prime Minister and Britain showered praise upon him as "the Bulgarian Bismarck." *Once again, Britain had not just ignored but heartily participated in breaking the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin.* With Queen Victoria's cousin now the ruler of Bulgaria, Britain's "sphere of influence" had spread even farther. The only action Abdul Hamid took on the entire matter was to impose an import duty on all Bulgarian produce entering what was now left of "the Ottoman Empire".

Now that Turkey's European empire was virtually extinct, Russia, France and Britain had turned their eyes towards garnering for themselves the Asian and African segments of it. Now there was no longer the usual excuse of capturing back lands of "Christian Europe", or even the threat of Muslim encroachment into Europe from Asia. Now it was "national economic security" of European powers thirsting for Asian riches and competing for passage to the Far East. This competition made the Suez Canal pivotal, just as the Bosphorus had been when Turkey was a formidable force. Russia's ambition to become the "new Byzantine empire" had never lessened, nor its yearning for southern "warm waters." France, despite Napoleon's failure to hold Egypt, was still eager to replace Britain's growing hold over Egypt, Mesopotamia, and its recent maneuvers in the Arab tribal lands between. There was India, where Britain was now lord and master. Aside from the riches which Egypt itself provided, its sea lanes to India and the Far East were crucial for the colonialists. And then there was the now shrunken Persia, once the world's most powerful and advanced nation.

( 18 )

There was evidence now that the idealism of some of the founding fathers of the US had not entirely disappeared from contemporary US in the midst of current corruption and greed. *Those original ideals had been submerged but they had survived Lincoln's murder;* they had filtered through to the "Other America", not a segment of any particular demographic description, but small bodies and individual Americans to whom those original aspirations were important — a farmer, a politician, a housewife, a reporter. *Even a Federal economist.*

W. Morgan Shuster was a highly qualified American economist, whose conscience would make him take the frontline against the brutality of colonial powers in Persia. A brief review of Persian history, as reported by Shuster, is necessary to understand how Persia, once the dominant power in the world, was now yet another victim of the Western colonialism. Shuster in *The Strangling of Persia* confirms vital facts of Persia's history from the mid-19th century onwards and was an eyewitness to what happened in 1910 and 1911.

The destruction of the once mighty Persian Empire had begun much earlier of course but while Persia had recovered to become a glorious center of learning and a powerful Muslim nation, Persia had never really recovered from the crushing of its very soul by the Crusaders and then the incredible massacres of millions and the burning of its priceless manuscripts by the Mongols in the 13th century AD.

Much of that extraordinary reservoir of knowledge of centuries, compiled by Muslim intellectuals, was lost forever. Then there had been the never-ending hostility of the Ottoman sultans. After Shi'ism became the official Islamic school of thought in Persia, religion was quickly used by leaders on both sides to gain public support. *What it certainly did was weaken both when both could have, with their enormous strength, stood up side by side to Western colonialists.* Despite these hostilities and wars with the Ottomans, the Safavid dynasty ruled in relatively prosperous times, Shah Abbas (1587-1629), made Isfahan capital, even encouraged Armenians to inhabit a quarter of the capital. Isfahan grew into such a glamorous center that English visitors reported that it rivaled London, says Shuster. However, in attempting to remove the Portuguese from taking a foothold in the Sea of Hormuz, the Shah foolishly accepted British help. And gradually the British entrenched themselves into Persia.

After Shah Abbas, his descendants formed a weak dynasty, which tempted the Afghans in 1709 to invade; they captured Isfahan and much of the country, proving that Muslim conquerors could still be just as greedy as Christian colonialists. Noting that Persia was now more vulnerable than ever, Tsar Peter ("the Great"), yearning for warm waters and rich Muslim lands, invaded Persia in 1722. Turkey felt it too should get a piece of this pie. In 1724 the Afghans and the Turks agreed to a settlement, whereby the Ottomans, the Russians and the Afghans captured most of the country. All that remained for Persia and the Safavids was the eastern part of the country. Driven from their palaces in Isfahan by the Russian invasion in 1722, the Safavids desperately sought the help of a fiery tribal leader, Nadir Quli Beg. Nadir Beg did restore the Safavids to the throne, but in 1736, he deposed the young Shah Abbas III, ending the Safavid dynasty, and placed himself on the throne under the title of Nadir Shah. This fiery military man succeeded in taking back the territories conquered by the Russians and the Turks, but even recaptured Kandahar from the Afghans, so Persia had most of its old borders back again. Then he invaded India, where the Mogul dynasty was tottering. He defeated Mogul emperor Mohammed Shah and took Delhi, the capital in 1739. Much of India's vast riches were in his grasp now. He captured the Peacock throne, which he sent back to Persia for the coronation of his descendants. Then, for some reason, he returned the bulk of Mohammed Shah's lands back to that ruler, keeping just the provinces on the southern banks of the Indus River which Darius the Great, the Persian Emperor, had once owned. Next he moved north against the advancing Russians and conquered Samarkand and Bokhara. By 1740, he had recovered all of the Persian territories which foreigners had taken. He was killed in 1747 and rivals created chaos for almost fifty years. In 1794, Agha Mohamed of yet another brigand tribe, the Qajar, defeated all others and claimed the title of Shah.

In all of this violence and warfare, it must be understood that, as always, the official line of the invaders was to proclaim an objective that appealed to the majority of their people. This appeal was usually a religious one. Western colonialists of course claimed to be spreading Christianity or stopping the spread of Islam. The Turks and even some Sunni Afghans sought to arouse ethnic hostility towards the

Persians after they became predominantly Shias, while the Persian rulers similarly aroused prejudices against the Sunnis. As we have seen (and will see later) the Sunni-Shia hate was so blatantly used by religious and political leaders that it often aroused more passions against one another than Muslim passions against Christian colonialists.

Now the colonialists employed their tried and proven method of seducing the corrupt Qajar regime. They provided protection and temptations to the Qajar to live extravagantly on the national treasury and even *beyond it*. In return, the colonial powers were happy to provide protection to the regime against the anger of the Persian populace for their corruption. *It was the ideal format that the colonialists had found worked best for them. Through this format, the public could be kept from demanding any form of power against corruption.* Tehran became the capital at this time. The intrigue and chaos for the throne had not ended however, and in 1797, Agha Mohamed was murdered. His nephew succeeded and reigned until 1834. The colonial powers were now ready to make their next move. Britain, already in virtual possession of India, had its navy steadily take control of the Persian Gulf. Russia continued its usual attempts to colonize Asia. At the start of the nineteenth century, the Russians invaded Persia, annexed Georgia. In 1805 it officially declared war, seized Derbent and Baku. Fathe Ali was in dire need of help. He turned to Britain, with whom there was a treaty since the time the Portuguese had threatened Persia. But Britain refused to help so the Persian-British treaty lapsed in 1807. Desperately Persia turned to France. Bonaparte and Fateh Ali signed the Franco-Persian Treaty of Finkenstein in 1807, whereby Bonaparte promised to recover any Persian territories taken by Russia. But soon, Bonaparte made peace with Tsar Alexander. Persia was now at the mercy of Russia. By the 1813 Treaty of Golestan, Persia ceded Georgia to Russia. Then Russia demanded and took three more districts. The Persian public demanded action, and Fateh Ali declared war. After initial successes, the Persian treasury was unable to even pay its troops, and it all ended with a humiliating Treaty in 1828, giving up not just Georgia but other territories as well. Just as Britain and France had extracted special rights, Russians now demanded and received special rights in Persia. *Russian commerce was now to be above Persian law, could function freely, without taxes, just as the French and British had functioned in the Ottoman Empire and in Egypt.*

Britain had refused help to Persia, but now Britain wished to get its share of the spoils. It tempted the corrupt Shah to sign another treaty with the British in 1814 whereby, in return for 150,000 pound sterling a year, Persia promised to have no commercial or military treaties with other countries without Britain's prior approval. Despite Britain's refusal to help when Russia had invaded, Persia trusted Britain once again and soon suffered! By 1827, Britain felt it was sufficiently entrenched in Persia and promptly discontinued this payment.

By the time Fathe Ali's grandson Mohamed Shah's reign had ended in 1848 Russia had captured more Persian territories while Persia was at war on the Afghan front. Britain, already seeking control of Afghanistan, joined the Afghan forces forcing the Persian back. In the process, the British invaded Kharg Island and conquered it.

Nasiruddin Shah, who succeeded his father Mohamed in 1848 at age seventeen, was to reign for 48 years. In 1856 Britain believed the Persians and Afghans, both Muslims, of similar heritage and language bonds, were getting too friendly again. Britain invaded and took Kharg Island again, then invaded the Persian port of Mohammereh. By now Britain was confident that its colonial hold of Afghanistan (what it called "The North-West Provinces of India"), was secure and it could concentrate its Machiavellian skills on Persia.

By the 1880s, the invading Russians had conquered central Asia and more of Persia's eastern and northern territories. This time, Britain agreed to help the Shah but demanded and got more commercial concessions from him. Behind the scene, Russia and Britain worked in unison as they tightened their grip upon the Persian ruler.

The Mongol holocaust, the incessant invasions and conquests, the colonialists, the conquest of their throne by warrior tribes who ruled as despots, had crushed the Persian masses over recent centuries; poverty was endemic among the populace. Like the Arabs, their one solace was God and they turned to the *Ulema* as their *safest* conduit to God. In Shi'ite Islam, *taglid* (alignment to the views of the highest qualified theologian called *Mustahid*) is required. So the emotional support to which the *Ulema* were privy, was very high. However, there had also been a further split within the religious elements so that there was not a unified front against the Shah. The *Mustahids* (the highly qualified apex of the religious hierarchy) had led a rebellion against the Shah in the 1840s but this failed because the movement was fragmented. There was the Agha Khan, the spiritual head of the offshoot Ismaili Shiites who claimed direct descent from the Prophet (which would eventually have little support in Persia, but a significant following in East Africa and India); then there was the Babi movement, led by Mirza Ali Mohammed, son of a Shiraz merchant, who declared himself the *Bab* (gateway) to the Divine Truth. This movement became so strong that in 1850, Nasiruddin Shah had the *Bab* executed. Two years later, his followers attempted to have the Shah killed. In the ensuing retaliation, the *Bab's* followers fled the country. They formed a new movement which was to grow into a vast international entity, the Bahais. *They were to make the Jewish city of Tel Aviv their world center.* This of course made Muslims even more angry and suspicious in future years.

As in the Ottoman state, the Persian public continued to demand reforms, led by the mainstream *Ulema* who severely criticized the Shah's extravagance and corrupt subservience to foreign powers. Seeking to soothe the public, Shah Nasiruddin reluctantly appointed the well-qualified Mirza Taqi Khan as Vezir. Mirza improved the education facilities, encouraged the publishing of newspapers. The armed forces were paid, and some abuses of power, which the government had indulged in, were ended. Mirza's growing popularity angered the Shah and his foreign patrons. Mirza Taqi Khan was removed, reportedly killed later.

The Shah now looked to see how Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II was handling the situation. Both were descendants of corrupt regimes, faced with the same colonial strangulation and the similar syndrome, of having one Christian



power invade, being forced to seek the help of another Christian power, who, in return for aid, insisted upon setting up punishing concessions, then joined hands with the other colonial power. Steadily Persia, like Turkey, was being dominated by foreign commercial interests over whom they had no controls, because of the Capitulation concessions. Egypt, almost severed from the Ottomans by the British and the French, was facing, as we have seen, similar Western strangulation. *All of this could have been wiped off if the monarchy was, but the colonial powers kept the "monarchs" in power.*

Over the centuries these countries could have withstood the foreign onslaught far better, even successfully, if Turkey, Egypt and Persia had become allies. But they had not. The hate of Sunnis and Shias towards each other and the corruption of their leaders was great, their desire to being accepted by "the people of the Book" and in the pay of the Christian powers even greater. In fact, had there been less monarchical corruption and egos and less of the Sunni-Shia hate, even the Mogul emperors in India and the Afghan tribal chieftains would have been part of a commonwealth of Muslim states, and therefore far less vulnerable than they had become individually to foreign colonialism. While Christian states were themselves divided, not just by sects but through secular rivalries, they had substantially reduced their prejudices and bitter hatred against each other, especially in light of their mutual distaste and contempt for Islam, and the lure of enormous wealth that could accrue from the subjugation of the Muslim states in this new version of the Crusades.

Like the Ottoman Sultan, the Persian Shah lived in extravagant self-indulgence, encouraged by the colonialists to do so, and were therefore usually more concerned about growing internal opposition than the colonial expansionism until it was too late. The Shah enjoyed traveling to Europe but did not permit foreign education even for the small wealthy upper class in Persia, the old aristocracy. As in Turkey, Persia's religious order agreed with this ban, for a different reason, i.e., from fear of bastardized education in Christian Europe. And so, as in Turkey, education even within the country was restricted and Western technological advances were not available to students generally. As limited "modernization" progressed towards the end of the nineteenth century, much of it had to be under the domain of foreign commercial interests, who naturally restricted that education to their own requirements and to propaganda for their own countries. Even the electric telegraph system, installed by the Indo-European Telegraph Company on behalf of the British government of India, was of considerable commercial and political advantage to the British in their Asian adventures. The British knew this, and in 1873, they prevailed upon the Shah to an extraordinary concession to a wealthy British naturalized citizen Baron Julius de Reuter (of the telegraph family). The Shah gave the Baron a 70 year monopoly on the construction and operation of all Persian railroads and streetcars and the exploitation of all mineral resources and government forests; also, the option to garner concessions on all roads, mills, factories, workshops and public works and the right to collect all Persian customs duties for 25 years. In return, de Reuter would pay only 20% of the railway profits and 15%

of profits from the other concessions to the Persian government. This gave so much to the British that Lord Curzon (Foreign Secretary) joyfully boasted in Parliament that it was "the most complete and extraordinary surrender of the entire industrial resources of a kingdom into foreign hands that has probably ever been dreamt of; much less accomplished in history."<sup>120</sup>

Russia was furious that this virtual sellout of Persian resources had gone to a competitive colonial power. Its threats led to a temporary suspension of the agreement, and in 1899 it was redesigned with some modifications. The new agreement also provided remarkable concessions. It gave Britain's de Reuter the right to establish the Imperial Bank of Persia, also the right to issue its own banknotes and a blanket permission to search for oil in Persia.

This mortgaging of their country by the Shah resulted in riots by the public, led by the religious orders. Shah Nasiruddin felt it would be diplomatic to neutralize this religious influence by inviting Jamal al-Din al-Afghani the Sunni preacher of pan-Islamic ideals, currently in exile from Egypt and Turkey. When al-Afghani came in 1886, the Shah gave him a warm welcome, convinced he could seduce him with wealth. Unfortunately for the Shah, Afghani became an outspoken critic of further concessions, including tobacco monopolies that the Shah now gave to the British. The Shah promptly deported al-Afghani, riots ensued and Nasiruddin was assassinated by one of al-Afghani's disciples in 1896. Demands for reform grew louder under his weak but extravagant son, the new Shah Muzaffaruddin. Malkom Khan, a senior government diplomat, became an open critic of the Shah's policies. He was dismissed, and he commenced a newspaper *Qanun* (Law). The Court banned the newspaper.

In 1903 the Shah appointed his son-in-law Prince Ayn-ud-Dula to assume overall control, provoking even greater public indignation. By now all classes of Persian society, intellectuals, merchants, bankers, joined the religious clerics (the *Ulema*) inside the mosques (following an ancient practice called *behst*) seeking leadership from the *Ulema* in a revolt against the Shah's corruption, extravagance and his willingness to mortgage the country to foreign domination. In 1906, the Shah was forced to agree to the creation of a parliament (*majlis*) and the drafting of a Constitution. But then he tried to abort the Constitution, through delays and reversals. So great was the danger of a possible revolution that even Russia and Britain loudly supported a constitutional monarchy rather than risk the ouster of the shah, their friend.

The Persian public had gained considerable strength recently from noting the public tumult in Russia and the defeat of Russia in the Russo-Japanese war the same year. It provided a psychological boost in that it showed that an Asian country could triumph over the military might of a Western colonial power. Muzaffaruddin was succeeded by his son Mohamed Ali in 1907, who, in his reign of two years, tried also to subvert the agreement of constitutional government by the simple method of an armed attack and bombardment of the Parliament in session, killing many elected members. The public rose to a huge protest march on the capital Tehran. Russia used its forces to quell the public rebellion, claiming it was doing so to protect

Russians in Persia. The Shah first took refuge in the Russian embassy and then had to flee to Russia. His 12 year old son Ahmed Mirza now succeeded him.

Britain and Russia recognized that public indignation and demands for major reforms were so intense that the only way to crush them was to make war jointly upon the Persian public. They had signed an agreement in August 1907 to declare, in effect, that all matters regarding Persia and Afghanistan, including *internal* matters, could only be decided between Britain and Russia. In effect, they divided Persia between them, Russia to control northern and central Persia, Britain to control the southeast. The southwest, mainly barren, was allowed to be "neutral." Even those among the Persian people, who hitherto had vaguely believed that the foreign powers (especially Britain) were there as friends of Persia, now recognized the true intent of the colonial powers.

After trying for two years to find oil, de Reuter had now abandoned attempts to do so. But in 1901, the young Muffaruddin and his retinue had been prevailed upon by the British to grant similar concessions to an Englishman William Knox D'Arcy for 60 years covering the *whole* of the Persian Empire. Britain prevailed upon the Shah and his vizier to "keep the deal secret from the Russians until it was signed." After trying for several years, D'Arcy had exhausted his funds. The British government, who were thirsting for oil (at the time 90 % of the world's oil came from the United States and Russia, controlled by the Standard Oil and Royal Dutch Shell) got the British Burmah Oil Company to link up with D'Arcy. In 1908 D'Arcy's engineers struck pay dirt: oil was drilled in what was to become one of the world's largest oilfields at Masjid-e-Sulaiman in southwest Persia. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company was now a major force in the oil market.

They faced one problem however. The oilfields were in the "barren" area which Britain and Russia had considered *unimportant to include in their "sphere of influence"*.<sup>1</sup> To get at this oil, the British secretly employed an outlaw tribal leader who operated in the "barren" area; he and his gangs operated as Britain's agent, attacking and driving away anyone who might interfere with Britain's oil-drilling activities, while it arm-twisted the Shah to get Southeast concessions.

In June 1914, just two months before the outbreak of World War I, the corrupt Shah agreed to an "Anglo-Persian" agreement under which oil supplies for twenty years were guaranteed to the British. The British government could now take a controlling interest in the company (later renamed Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and eventually British Petroleum). All it cost the British government was 2.2 million pounds sterling. *A few conscientious British Parliamentarians went on record worrying about how thoroughly this would destroy the Persian economy, but they were easily outvoted.*<sup>121</sup> By this time, the Iranian uprising, which forced the creation of Parliament, had been crushed brutally, their leaders hanged, and Persia was under complete control of the British and the Russians. Those hanged included the leading Ayatollahs. They were hanged in public on the 10th of Muharram, a sacred day of mourning for Shia Muslims, the majority in Iran. It was later reported that among the children who watched some of the hangings was a boy later called Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

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The truth of what transpired in this turbulent period might have forever been camouflaged by the West had it not been for that remarkable American, W. Morgan Shuster. His account stands in sharp contrast to the many lauded "textbooks" written on the subject. Needless to add, his book never received the acclaim or the publicity it deserved, but it *did* keep future Western historians in some restraint.

Shuster came to Persia because the new Persian Parliament (*Majlis*) felt that of the Western countries, the US was less corrupt than Europe, so it asked the US to send an economist to bring its corrupted Treasury in order. The US sent Shuster. He came with his wife, children and eight assistant economists.

The British and the Russians were quite willing to accept the appointment of this American, assuming he would be one their own. But if they expected him to be of the breed with which they usually dealt, they were in for an unpleasant surprise: *W. Morgan Shuster turned out to be a man of genuine integrity.*

When he returned to the US some two years later, Shuster felt so strongly about what he had witnessed himself, that even as he pleaded with the Taft administration to help the Persians, he recorded his experience in Persia in a book. In the Forward of this book, *The Strangling of Persia* (Century Publ.N.Y., 1912, reprinted Mage Publishers Washington D.C. 1987) Shuster mentions "the downfall of this ancient nation — scenes in which two powerful and presumably enlightened Christian countries [Britain and Russia] played fast and loose with truth, honor, decency and law, one at least hesitated not even at the most barbaric cruelties to accomplish its political designs and put Persia beyond hope of self-regeneration. In the belief that the real interests of humanity and the betterment of international relations demand that the truth be told in cases of this kind, I have written down the facts with a bluntness which, perhaps, in the circumstances, would be subject to criticism".<sup>122</sup> That "betterment" for which he pleaded of course did not come, as President Taft refused to act against the British. *Instead there was even more brutality towards the Persian, once Shuster had left.*

Persian sources provide details of the most gruesome excesses committed by the British and the Russians. But only W. Morgan Shuster will be used here to confirm what we have already reviewed in part about Persia from the era of Nasiru'd-Din Shah to the time Shuster arrived.

Shuster reports that Shah Nasiru'd-Din's corrupt nature was apparent from the start, the British quickly exploited his corruption to the full. Encouraged by Britain and Russia, the Shah ruled as an absolute monarch, ignoring growing public demand for a constitution and a Parliament. The colonialists made deals with the Shah, (the telegraph, banking, oil, the "capitulations", etc.) who like his predecessor and like the Ottoman Sultan and the Khedvis of Egypt, was quite willing to receive large sums as "commission" to help defray his extravagant lifestyle, in return for which he readily agreed to grant commercial concessions (some of which we have already examined) to the British and the Russians at ridiculously low prices. But details of these giveaways were carefully kept secret from the public. But in



1891, the leaders of the national movement were able to obtain details of one of his most recent "Concession" with the British. The Shah had given a British corporation a monopolistic concession for the handling, buying and selling of all tobacco in Persia. Shuster reports that the corporation was capitalized at 650,000 pounds sterling and was expected to make an annual profit of about 500,000 pounds sterling. One quarter of the profits was to go to the Shah and his close associates.

With this proof-positive, says Shuster, the long-suffering Persians exploded this time and with the aid of the *Ulema* (who were very much a part of the movement for a constitutional government) they went on strike against this wholesale selling of their rights and industries. In December 1891, as a result of a religious decree announced by the *Ulema*, all the tobacco shops closed their doors, the people destroyed or put away their water-pipes [the *hookah*], and the use of tobacco practically ceased. The agitation continued until the Shah had been forced to rescind the Concession. The British demanded compensation, and the Shah agreed to pay the British an indemnity of 500,000 pounds sterling. He did not have it, so the British lent the amount to the Shah's regime which, as Shuster puts it, "arbitrarily fastened upon the Persian people an annual interest charge of £ 30,000, for which they received no tangible return."

Nasir'i-d-Din Shah was shot dead by an al-Afghani supporter, as we have seen, on May 1, 1896. However, the motive, says Shuster "was not unconnected with the general belief that the rights of Persia were being rapidly sold out to foreigners." Crown Prince Muzaffar'u-d-Din Shah Qajar became Shah on June 8, 1896. Agitation for a constitutional government grew to fever-pitch. After a mass sit-down by crowds in the compound of the British Legislation [Embassy], seen as the real culprit of the corruption of the Shah, the Shah gave in. On Aug. 5, 1906, the constitution was drafted. A Parliament (*Majlis*) was to be created to have a voice in the selection of ministers and framing of laws. When Muzaffar'u-d-Din died on Jan. 4, 1907, he was succeeded by Crown Prince Muhammad Ali Mirza. He was "perhaps the most perverted, cowardly, and vice-sodden monster that had disgraced the throne of Persia in many generations" says Shuster<sup>121</sup>. He ignored the *Majlis*, "intrigued with Russian emissaries against his own people, and actually contracted with Russia and England for a secret loan of 400,000 pounds, to be squandered by himself." Corruption was rampant despite the efforts of the *Majlis*. In one case, that of a Belgian Monsieur Naus, "who had succeeded in acquiring a large fortune" the *Majlis* succeeded in having him removed for his corruption and theft as the head of Persian Customs, despite British and Russian objections. Naus was sent back to Belgium. But now the Shah brought back a notorious criminal Aminu's-Sultan (aka Atabak-i-Azam) who had been exiled for his nefarious activities in 1902. The Russians greeted his return with great pomp and he was installed as Prime Minister! "Matters went from bad to worse, and during the month of August, Russia which had never been content with the establishment of a constitutional monarch in Persia, began to threaten the *Majlis* with [military] intervention." Soon thereafter Atabak was shot and killed by a revolutionary student. That same day the English and Russian government had

signed a treaty between themselves to avoid "misunderstandings." The document also claimed "to respect the integrity and independence of Persia."<sup>124</sup> In reality, of course they had agreed, Shuster says, to do the opposite of what that document said. They had agreed to divide Persia between themselves.

When news of the true intent leaked out, there was public uproar. "The Persian people resented having their country 'partitioned' over-night, even by imaginary geographical lines drawn by self-styled friendly governments",<sup>125</sup> says Shuster. By now the newspapers had garnered a modicum of freedom and they criticized the Shah for allowing such blatant mischief by foreign powers. The national agitation made Shah Muhammad Ali very nervous and on Nov 4, 1907 he came to the *Majlis* and swore "on the Quran to be faithful to the Constitution." However "it was apparent that, early in December, Muhammad Ali Shah had made up his mind to destroy the *Majlis*." He set up the "Cossack Brigade, a body of 1200 to 1800 Persians, commanded by Russian army officers detailed by the Russian Government for that purpose, but paid by the Persian treasury, and an undisciplined organization made up of his own servitors, grooms, and musketeers, augmented by discontented rabble of the capital." The official Persian army had fallen into such abandon and disrepute that nobody paid much attention to it. On December 15, the Shah had the entire *Majlis* forcibly detained. "Meanwhile the Shah's hired ruffians started a disturbance in the 'Gun Square' in the central part of Tehran." Again, nationwide agitation became so intense that the Shah was forced to release the *Majlis* members, and once again "to send to the *Majlis* a solemn, sealed oath to obey the Constitution." By June 1908, the Shah was pressured into dismissing a number of his corrupt courtiers, who were very close to the Russian and English interests. The next day, June 2, 1908, "began the open intervention of Russian and British Legations which so directly contributed to the overthrow of the *Majlis* and the bombardment of the Baharistan by the Cossack Brigade just three weeks later. In effect, the Russian Minister Mons. de Hartwig, and the British Charge d'Affaires, Mr. Marling, called on the Persian Minister of Foreign Affairs and threatened the Government with Russian intervention if the opposition to the Shah's plans and wishes did not cease"<sup>126</sup> says Shuster. Following this threat, the Shah began to arrest Constitutionalists, "whom he had invited to confer with him... he then sent Cossacks with an ultimatum to the *Majlis*, threatening bombardment of a mosque if the people there did not disperse, demanded the expulsion of a number of pro-Constitution editors and orators, made a number of prisoners." In fact the Shah "declared martial law in the city [Tehran], and placed the Russian Colonel Liakhoffin in supreme command... before sunrise on June 23, over 1000 Cossacks and other troops surrounded the *Majlis* buildings... deputies who rushed in were allowed to enter but not to come out." Soon there was shelling of the Parliament building itself by Colonel Liakhoffin's troops, and "Colonel Liakhoffin and his troops bombarded and looted for several days the homes of persons disliked by the Shah... The records of the *Majlis* were destroyed. Colonel Liakhoffin remained the virtual dictator of Tehran... There has been considerable evidence [that] Liakhoffin was actually carrying out the designs of the so-called 'forward party', a reactionary

clique who surrounded the Czar at St. Petersburg, and of whom Monsieur de Hartwig, the Russian Minister at Tehran was such a striking example."<sup>127</sup>

By now riots had broken out throughout Persia. In effect it was a revolution, and despite the reinforcements that were brought to the Shah's forces, in many cities, the nationalists were winning, though many thousands were killed. In some cities however, like Tabriz, the Shah's forces, aided by a local brigands ("kept to the task by promises of unrestricted rapine and loot" says Shuster) cut off the supply of food to the city, and hundreds were dying of hunger. "*Nationalists were joined by two foreigners, Mr. W.A. Moore, a Britisher... and Mr. H.C. Baskerville, an American ...on April 21, Baskerville was killed.*"<sup>128</sup>

Despite their heavy losses, by July 13, 1908 the ad hoc Nationalist forces, by sheer numbers, had major successes; they entered Tehran where "the people received the nationalist forces with the greatest enthusiasm... the Shah ...took refuge in the Russian Legation... both Russian and British flags were hoisted over the Russian Minister's home as soon as it was occupied by the Shah... late the same evening... the Shah was formally deposed."<sup>129</sup>

His son Sultan Ahmed Mirza, aged twelve, was proclaimed successor as a constitutional monarch. The Constitutional Government's Emergency National Committee worked out with the British and Russian Legations how the deposed Shah Muhammad Ali could leave Persia, after settling his huge debts and mortgages, and after he gave up the Crown Jewels. An agreement was reached on Sept 7. It was signed by the Russian and British dignitaries, the ex-Shah was given an annual pension of \$80,000 by Persia, and he left on Sept 9 for Russia.<sup>130</sup>

The new constitutional regime was formally recognized by Russia and Britain. Young Shah Ahmed Mirza entered Tehran with full honors on July 20. The National Council nominated a Cabinet, a free press was declared and on Nov. 15, 1909 the new Majlis had its first session.

A large Russian army, however, was still stationed in Northern Persia. Both the British and the Russian promised they would be removed soon, that they were there "for the protection of foreign rights and property from the possibility of danger."<sup>131</sup> There was financial chaos from the ex-Shah's enormous debts mainly to foreign countries; haphazard accounts had been maintained. The new government found that things were much worse than even they had feared. Persia was on the brink of bankruptcy, from the exploitation by Britain and Russia with the ex-Shah as tool. A Frenchman Mons Bizot was now employed by the new government to clean up the mess, but apparently during "the two years he remained in Tehran he accomplished no actual reform and conditions went from bad to worse."<sup>132</sup> There was now additional corruption to cope with from some within the new government itself, seduced by the foreigners, says Shuster. Russia "open hostility" in consort with Britain created "a most extraordinary and peculiar relationship towards certain foreign powers, which relationship had been forced upon her [Persia] regardless of her rights as a sovereign nation," says Shuster<sup>133</sup>.

On the quiet, the Russians and the British had commenced to encourage brigands and insurrections against the Constitutional government, such as in Sept

1909 when a notorious brigand Rahim Khan created havoc in the town of Ardabil. The Russians took this as an excuse to use their troops to create more havoc, and when the brigand had in fact been cornered by Persia's new national government forces, he was allowed to escape into Russia, from where he returned in January 1911 "to Tabriz, to become a further source of expense and difficulty to the Constitutional regime."<sup>134</sup> In May 1910, Darab Mirza, a Persian by birth but now a naturalized Russian, held a commission in the Russian Cossack regiment, created a force to overthrow the Constitutional government. Russian troops claimed to have held him. But when a Persian force was sent to arrest him, the *Russian fired upon the Persian force*. "Although the Russian authorities denied all complicity in this attempt to provoke a civil war, it was proved that a certain Russian Colonel at Kazvin [Qasmeen] had supplied a number of Darab [Mirza] Shah's accomplices with letters of protection signed and sealed by the Colonel himself, declaring the bearers to be under the protection of the Emperor of Russia and threatening severe punishment for any Persian who might interfere with them or their followers."<sup>135</sup>

The Persian Majlis had been seeking, since December 1909, to obtain a loan of about \$2,500,000 to bring the economy in order. The Russian and British Governments said they could provide the loan "but the conditions which the two powers endeavored to impose upon the granting of this assistance were so dangerous to, and even destructive of, Persia's independence, that the Majlis was compelled to reject them. Shortly thereafter Persia entered into negotiations with a private banking house in London for a loan and it was on the point of being concluded on terms mutually satisfactory, when, in October 1910, *the negotiations were brought to an end through the action of the British Government, working in harmony with Russia, whereby Persia was prevented from realizing money on the Crown jewels which she [Persia] was ready to pledge for the loan*," writes Shuster<sup>136</sup>. By now "Russia had been openly endeavoring to exhort a number of valuable concessions from the Persian Majlis as the price of withdrawing her troops from Northern Persia. The general attitude of the two powers towards Persia was marked with increasing unfriendliness and hostility."

So far the British had limited forces of their own in the region and had relied almost exclusively upon the large Russian forces that had poured in from the northern border and occupied much of northern Persia. On October 16, 1910, however, the British government issued an ultimatum to Persia that British-Indian Army forces should be allowed to "police" the roads "under the general supervision of the British Government. This action provoked the greatest alarm and protest in both Persia and Turkey." They appealed to Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm "to display his friendliness toward the people of Islam." The Kaiser, in his recent visit to Istanbul had made some very complimentary comments about Islam that had moved the Muslim world greatly. However, Russia now rushed to sign the Potsdam Agreement with Germany in November 5, 1910. Shuster reports that Russia claimed that a provision in this agreement gave Russia Germany's permission "to adopt a harsh and drastic attitude toward the Persian nation." Persia's plea to the German Kaiser went unheeded.<sup>137</sup> In February 1911, Russian troops massacred 60 villagers, including women and children at Varmuni, in Persia.



Shuster provides many examples of treachery by the Russians and the British, from the time he arrived to become the Treasurer-General of Persia (appointed by the Constitutional Government) and the time when, his sympathies and abhorrence at the injustices practiced against the Persians were so obvious, that the two powers gave ultimatums to the Persian Government for his removal ("or else"). The Persian Majlis, (Parliament), very grateful to Shuster for his integrity and honesty, refused to remove him. So the Russians and the British conducted the coup d'état which first removed the Majlis, and then removed Shuster from office.

Shuster provides extensive lists of the duplicity practiced by the Russians and the British, which he personally witnessed, and which he documents at times with official decrees and letters. It is impractical to provide those lengthy documents here, but the following are a few examples of the other excesses which Shuster himself witnessed and experienced:

- 1) "I found that there was a tax of 64 krans (about \$5.70) per 600 pounds on Persian salt mined within the country, whereas the Customs tax on foreign salt imported was only \$0.9 for the same quantity. Also no internal tax could be imposed under the Customs stipulations, on imported articles, the salt-producers of Persia and the people living in the interior districts were most unjustly treated. In addition the Persian Government had received in the course of a year from this purely revenue-producing measure the insignificant net sum of 42,000 tumans (about \$37,000) although the gross taxes collected from the people were nearly 209,000 tumans — the expenses of collection [by the foreigners] absorbing all the difference. I immediately recommended the abolition of this unproductive and uneconomic law and the Majlis approved my recommendation."<sup>138</sup> This was early in his term and the British and Russians accepted this decision with some protests.
- 2) When Shuster proposed controls on transfer of foreign currencies, "the Russian Legation openly declared war upon it [Majlis] and the Russian Minister announced that the Belgian Customs employees should not be subjected to the control and supervision of the American Treasurer-general, and even went so far as to threaten to have Russian troops seize the customs houses in the north and put Russian officials in charge. During the next two weeks, the Russian, French, German, Italian, and Austro-Hungarian Legations at Tehran rained protests upon the Persian Foreign Office, many of them couched in the most undiplomatic, impolite and insulting language, in a brazen attempt to bulldoze the Persian Government into giving up its rights to act as it saw fit in this purely local and internal affair."<sup>139</sup>
- 3) "On July 18... the telegraph brought us the news that Muhammad Ali, the ex-Shah of Persia, who was supposed to be interned under the watchful eye of the Russian Government had landed that day ...on Persian soil...this was the proverbial bolt from the blue, for while rumors of such a thing had been current ...few people in Tehran believed that Russia would have

the face to violate so openly the solemn stipulation which she had signed with Great Britain and with Persia less than two years before... the Nationalists feared that the ex-Shah was going to be restored to power by the Russians, and that the city [Tehran] would be given over to be pillaged by the Turcoman tribesmen who were accompanying him." While Britain claimed it was not in favor of the ex-Shah's return, it also sent a note to the Persian Government stating that British "could not intervene", that "they will in no way interfere." However "when the Majlis ruled that the ex-Shah's pensions and properties inside Persia must now be seized, as he had clearly violated all the terms of the agreement, both the Russian and British delegation raised no objection in writing. But when the author [Shuster] sent his delegates on Oct 9 to seize the ex-shah's estates, they were confronted by Russian soldiers who threatened them with beatings and shooting."<sup>140</sup>

- 4) On July 28, "one of the deputies of the Majlis brought before me a Persian *fidai* and informed me that the man had just confessed to him that he had come from an interview with a certain Russian Vice-consul at Tehran, who had urged him, as a means of gaining Russian protection and goodwill, to shoot or poison me, as 'I was balking Russia's plans in Persia'."<sup>141</sup>
- 5) "When the ex-shah's brother Shuau Saltana died, the Russians claimed he was indebted to them for a huge amount and demanded 225,000 tumans [Persian currency] from the Persian government." Shuster was able to learn from other documents that in fact the shah's brother had *loaned* huge amounts to the Russians, not the other way around. "This attempt by the Russian State Bank to defraud the Persian Government of a large sum was so fragrant that the British Minister took sides with the Persians and the scheme failed."<sup>142</sup>
- 6) Shuster believed that if he exposed the British government's shenanigans in Persia to the British public and the British Foreign Office, they would be shocked and make amends. "When Russia made fierce demands on the Persian government essentially asking that Russia and Britain should have over-riding powers over the country, the author [Shuster] wrote a letter to the London Times, in response to which *The London Times* published an editorial on my open letter, *accusing me at the end of having 'thrown in my lot' with the Persian nationalists*... By Nov. 11, the Persian Cabinet, having been thoroughly frightened by the extensive preparations which Russia was evidently making for occupying Northern Persia, consulted the British Government as to what course should be pursued. Sir Edward Grey promptly cabled his advice to accept the Russian ultimatum, and apologize as was demanded [by the Russians]. In Parliament, Grey accused Shuster of turning back the clock."<sup>143</sup>
- 7) On Nov 29, the Russians sent a second "ultimatum, this time demanding also that the Russian troops stationed in Persia must be *paid* for by the Persian Government when in fact those troops were used *against* the

*Persian people by the Russians and were as source of constant terror. And this ultimatum even included the name of the British Government with that of the Russians. And this ultimatum demanded that Shuster should be dismissed immediately."*<sup>144</sup>

The leaders of the Majlis talked with Shuster, asking his views regarding the joint Russian-British ultimatum; "I desired them to take whatever decision they considered best for the Persian people, without any thought of myself or of my American assistants." In the Majlis, the Premier (known to be now in the pay of the colonial powers, says Shuster) arose and proposed that the Russia demand be accepted. At this "a venerable priest of Islam arose... This servant of God spoke briefly and to the point: 'It may be the will of Allah that our liberty and sovereignty shall be taken from us by force, but let us not sign them away with our own hands!'" One gesture of appeal with his trembling hands, and he resumed his seat. Simple words, these, yet winged ones. Easy to utter in academic discussions; hard, bitterly hard to say under the eye of a cruel and overpowering tyrant whose emissaries watched the speaker from the galleries and marked him down for future imprisonment, torture, exile or worse. Other deputies followed. In dignified appeals, brief because time was so short, they upheld their country's honor and proclaimed their hard-earned right to live and govern themselves...every man, priest, or layperson, youth or octogenarian, had cast his own die of fate, had staked the safety of himself and his family, and hurled back into the teeth of the great Bear from the North the unanimous answer of a desperate and down-trodden people who preferred a future of unknown terror to the voluntary sacrifice of their national dignity and of their recently earned right to work out their own salvation. Amidst tears and applause from the spectators, the Crest fallen and frightened members of the Cabinet withdrew."<sup>145</sup>

There were assassination attempts of Persian parliamentarians who opposed the ultimatum. When this did not work, Russia issued a 48 hour ultimatum. Russia was acting on what Shuster calls "her long-cherished plans for the absorption of Persia... despite all this the Persians...had too much confidence in the sacredness of treaty stipulations [Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907] and the solemnly pledged words of the great Christian nations of the world to imagine that their whole national existence and liberties could be thus menaced overnight, and on a pretext so shallow and farcical. Their disillusionment came too late."

"It is impossible to describe the days and nights of doubt, suspense and anxiety which followed one another during this dark month of December in the capital...A boycott was proclaimed by the Islamic priests (sic) against the Russian and English goods" By now the Russians were already amassing troops and soon 12,000 troops were near Tehran, having occupied all of Persia north of the city. In next-door Turkey, concerned members of its new Parliament asked about the future of Persia. "The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs...replied that Persia's independence could not be in danger, because it was *guaranteed* by the Anglo-Russian agreement!"<sup>146</sup>

Shuster was provided by the Persians with armed guards twenty-four hours, for his safety and that of his wife and children who were with him in Persia. Threats had been made against Shuster by the colonialists, who won by having him ousted from Persia. Some members of the Majlis begged Shuster to get the US government to help them. Shuster tried to get the Taft regime to do so, but without success.

Shuster gives high praise to Persian women and their conduct in this dangerous crisis. "The Persian women since 1907 had become almost at a bound the most progressive, not to say, radical, in the world. *That this statement upsets the ideas of centuries [in Western countries regarding Muslim women] makes no difference. It is a fact.* It is not too much to say that without the powerful moral force of these so-called chattels of the oriental lords of creation, the ill-starred and short-lived revolutionary movement, however well conducted by the Persian men, would have paled into a mere disorganized protest. *The women did much to keep the spirit of liberty alive...* Equally strange is the fact that this yearning by the people received the support of large numbers of the Islamic priests — a class which stood to lose much of its traditional influence and privilege by the contemplated changes... We of Europe and America are long accustomed to the increasingly large role played by Western women in business, in the professions, in literature, in science, and in politics, but *what shall we say of the veiled women of the Near East who overnight became teachers, newspaper writers, founders of women's clubs and speakers on political subjects?*"<sup>147</sup> (italics added). Shuster provides several other examples of how the Persian women organized in revolt against foreign domination.

On December 24, there was a *coup d'état* by some of the former Cabinet members, willing tools of the Russians, along with Bakhtiari tribesmen and the Shah's Royal Regiment. Even the Armenian head of the Tehran police, Ephraim Khan, sold out to the colonialists. "Between the two forces, they abolished the last vestige of constitutional rule in Persia, and left their country at the mercy of seven oriental statesmen who had already sold out to the Russian Government. It was a sordid ending to a gallant struggle for liberty and enlightenment."<sup>148</sup> The new "Cabinet" had already accepted Russia's demands, (which included the ouster of Shuster as Treasurer-general) and after the coup had asked Shuster to resign and go back to his country. Shuster had no recourse but to agree to resign. In the meanwhile Russian troops were conducting a massacre in Tabriz. The Acting Governor reported that the Russian troops indulged in terrible brutality, killing women and children in the streets and hundreds of other non-combatants. There were about 4,000 Russian troops and two batteries of artillery around the city [Tabriz]. About 1000 of the Tabriz *fidais* [religious] took refuge in an old citadel called the 'Ark'... The Russians bombarded the place for some time, killing a large number of the *fidais*. The superior numbers and the artillery of the Russians finally conquered, and there then ensued a period of terrorism during which no Persian life or honor was safe."<sup>149</sup>

Then on "the 10th of Muharram, a day of great mourning and held sacred in the Persian religious calendar, the Russian Military Governor, who had hoisted



Russian flags over the Government buildings at Tabriz, hung [to death] the Sikutul Islam, who was the high priest at Tabriz, two other priests and five others, among them several high officials of the provincial Government. As one British journalist put it, the effect of this outrage on the Persians was that which would be produced on the English people by the hanging of the Archbishop of Canterbury on Good Friday" reports Shuster.

Despite the fact that the "traitorous ministers" of Persia had "sold out their people" by agreeing to all the Russian and British demands, Russian troops continued their killing spree, and therefore public indignation grew until January. In the meanwhile Shuster resigned his office, passing on the position to a Mr. Cairnes, one of fourteen Americans he had as assistants. This had been agreed by the "traitorous" Cabinet. However the British and Russians now wanted their own man, the notorious Belgian Mons Mornard (the Belgian found guilty earlier of corruption and banished) to succeed Shuster as Persia's Treasurer-general, even after Cairnes had been installed. Shuster departed in great sadness, he tells us, greatly moved by the loving farewell he received from the masses, who gathered in the thousands to wish him farewell.

Shuster's following paragraph is one that should have been written in letters of gold on Capitol Hill and the White House. "The Persians are as a rule kind and hospitable. They have an undue respect for foreigners...As a race they showed during the past five years an unparalleled eagerness for education. Hundreds of schools were established during the Constitutional regime. A remarkably free press sprang up overnight, and fearless writers came forward to denounce injustice and tyranny whether from within their country or without. The Persians are eager to adopt wholesale the political, ethical and business codes of the most modern and progressive nations. They burned with that same spirit of Asiatic unrest which pervades India, which [also] produced the 'Young Turk' movement [in Turkey], and which has more recently manifested itself in the establishment of the Chinese Republic. The East has awakened. Persia unfortunately awoke too late. Her futile struggles towards the light were quickly suppressed by a power whose own strength lies only in the path of darkness...Russia and England have apparently thought that by maintaining a 'dummy' Persian government at Teheran they could evade responsibility in the eyes of the world for what is going on in that stricken country...Mercy cant, however seriously put forth in official statements, no longer blinds educated public opinion as to the facts in these acts of international brigandage. The truth is that England and Russia have been playing a hand in the game of medieval diplomacy. *Le Prince* [i.e., Machiavellian policies] is still their textbook, but they fool no one — not even the Persian tools and Judases who compose the so-called government and take Russian roubles and ruling with equal alacrity."<sup>150</sup>

Shuster's expectation, like that of Prof. Draper, that somehow all such evil deeds and falsehoods would soon be exposed, revealed their own decency. It never happened. While naive in his expectation of West's "educated public's" horror, Shuster was incisive in understanding international politics of the times. He believes England even financed Russia to crush Germany. "The Russo-Japanese war had

left Russia decidedly weak. She needed money to rebuild her navy, to promote industries... To build up the war-spent Russia, therefore, and to make entente with her which should do for England on the north of Germany what the understanding with France had done on the south. That was the plan. Some called it 'drawing a circle around Germany'. The Germans evidently regarded it in that light."<sup>151</sup>

Shuster tried hard to get Washington to save Persia from "strangulation". But President Robert Howard Taft was setting up what was to become the core of Republican Conservatism. It was the logical next step in Anglophilia, the cancer that had existed in the US from Alexander Hamilton onwards but which gradually became national policy after Lincoln was murdered. The American rich could not develop blue blood, except in the occasional marriage with an impoverished member of European aristocracy, which at this stage was being sought with great aplomb (as reported in some detail by Prof. Maureen Montgomery, in *Gilded Prostitution*, Routledge, 1989). But they could do the next best thing. They could adopt the philosophy that served aristocratic England so well, the claim that the rich were entitled to special privileges, and colonialism was good and right. The problem was of course that the American rich did not have the deportment, the education that aristocratic England now possessed. *And most had only just grabbed riches* But they sought to make the possession of money no matter how acquired as what mattered, and often succeeded. So those who had become rich now wished to have a government that favored no change, no matter how agitated the "do-gooders" demands became. Income Tax was wrong, the giant enterprises should be allowed full freedom, the government should not interfere. They owned newspapers that wanted no change in money matters. This defined American Conservatism. This also satisfied the social yearning to identify with England's aristocracy. It was a blatant departure from America's founding principles, this lust for gold, identifying blindly with England, which founders like Jefferson had warned against. But to Taft's Republicans this was tradition. They liked it fine and were certainly not inclined to irritate the British on behalf of Persia, a Muslim country.

In many ways, this set the pattern of American foreign policy, in effect rejecting the US founding principles in favor of the lure of acceptance by Britain's upper classes, in what was to become the Power Cartel and its values. So, in future years, Taft was to be called the Big Daddy of Republicanism. Detractors simply called him Big Fatty (he weighed well over 300 lbs).

( 20 )

A huge shock hit the wheelers and dealers in the 1912 US presidential election. Taft lost his bid for re-election, because fellow-Republican Theodore Roosevelt also decided to run and did so for the new "Bull Moose" Party. This diffused the Republican vote, allowing a Democrat to break the chain and become President. Not only was he a career academic, a professor and Princeton University President, it was the first and last time a Ph.D. was elected President. "The Government of the United States is now the foster-child of Special Interests" Woodrow Wilson

had said "It is told at every move 'Don't do this, you will interfere with our prosperity'. And when we ask 'Where is this prosperity?' a certain group of gentlemen say 'With us'. The Government of the United States in recent years has not been administered by the common people of the United States" in academic understatement style.

Taft's Republicans had retained enough power to make him Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He thwarted every reform move that President Wilson sought to implement, even those against child labor, an open scandal at the time. Wilson got Congress to pass a bill levying an extra tax on products made with child labor. The Supreme Court held that was invalid. Then Wilson signed a bill prohibiting interstate transport of products made with child labor. The Taft Supreme Court squashed that. Wilson tried to get child labor prohibited in dangerous trades. The Supreme Court over-ruled him.

Wilson was realist enough to recognize that a sudden change after several decades of Big Business government was not feasible. He repeatedly stated he was not against prosperity for business and industry, just its excesses and corruption, and the previous administrations for decades had disregard the plight of the rest of society. But any reform measure was enough to frighten the rich; moves to introduce income tax had been fought for years. Now there was a massive coalition building against Wilson, including the new millionaires from the emerging motion picture industry.

Wilson's idealism and deep belief in the founding principles led him to claim that these democratic principles were meant not just for the US *but were universal*. This shocked many politicians. But Wilson had more shocks for them. Mindful of the fact that the US had moved very far in recent years away from those founding principles, he argued strongly against "hyphenated-Americanism", the tendency of ethnic groups (Anglo-Saxons at that stage) to cluster together and treat others as different. *"A man who thinks of himself as belonging to a particular national group has not yet become an American... You do not love humanity if you seek to divide humanity into jealous groups"* he said in his message to American Citizens of foreign birth in 1915. He urged them to remind America what it may have forgotten of its founding principles. *"I hope you have brought dreams with you... You are enriching us if you come expecting us to be better than we are"*

Contrary to subsequent image-making, most of the South consisted of shantytowns with poor uneducated whites. In some areas, such as the Appalachians, communities were found as late as the 1920s who were entirely illiterate: one of the very first movie documentaries ever made called *Stark Love* (in 1928) was about them; they were of British origin, lived very primitive lives; *everything* was done in front of other members of the family in single-room hutments; boys and girls coupled; those who wished to, were married by a priest who visited the communities periodically.

Most Americans disliked Wilson's criticism of what he considered un-American "we-they" attitudes. The Ku Klux Klan in particular despised such ideas. The Ku Klux Klan had begun in Tennessee after the Civil War and spread swiftly,

especially in the impoverished South. Those who were especially racists despised the idea of "Negroes" being freed from slavery and being granted, theoretically, the same rights as whites. Lincoln was killed because of this.

The Ku Klux Klan claimed to be ardent Christians who believed that the Holy Bible says (e.g., in Genesis 9:25-27) that the races should be segregated. They also believed that the Whites were the true Chosen People. They went farther. The US was for White Anglo-Saxon Protestants, not Negroes, Mexicans, Indians, Jews, or even Catholics (thought the last were tolerated if they were white). In a country where ancestry was, at best, vague, race was mainly on pigmentation and personal claims. The membership of the Klan grew fast, in fact in the early 1900s, it included many politicians who subsequently held high government positions (among them Hugo Black, Supreme Court Justice, who admitted to belonging as a young man). They set Crosses on fire, wore white shrouds, and indulged in acts of violence against the American blacks.

Wilson's criticism of ethnic-groupings angered some overseas as well. The British, who by now banked so heavily upon their "cousinly link" with wealthy America, were appalled.

## ( 21 )

Now that Sultan Abdul Hamid realized that his nation in Eastern Europe was doomed and the only reason the European powers had allowed him even the superficial suzerainty over what remained of it, was because each European power had designs on garnering control over Eastern Europe when Turkey was finally crushed. Each waited for the opportune time. Abdul Hamid himself was determined to hold on to his Asian and African empire, and the most powerful appeal he could muster to retain this empire was religion. "He was switching his center of gravity eastward, in the direction of Islam" says Kinross.

For centuries now, when taking the offensive against Turkey, European powers had appealed to the emotional prejudices of their masses, deeply ingrained by now since they began at the very inception of Islam. To Christian Europe (and now to the US, where even American academics were Europe's pupils in all such matters) the Ottomans were barbaric Muslims (Moslems, Mohametans, etc.). It did not matter that corrupt Sultans were the creation of Europe, or that this was sweeping condemnation of the entire society from the actions of a dictatorial government. Even relatively responsible historians of the 19th and 20th century were to employ the popular appellations to the "unspeakable Turk."

It must be noted that Lord Kinross, himself a British diplomat most of his life, while fairer in recording *early Ottoman history than some bigots*, becomes defensive of British acts as he approaches the *contemporary* era in his chronicles. For instance, referring to Abdul Hamid's switch towards his Asian empire, Kinross says "Asia was the cradle not only of his race and of his dynasty, but also his religion and that of the great mass of his people."<sup>152</sup> Had the Ottoman sultans embraced Christianity (also an *Asian* religion) the racial issue would never have



been the target, just as the *Asian origins of so much of Eastern Europe, from Greece to the Balkans to the Russian empire*, was never discussed. Subtly, Kinross here echoes the more fiery and openly racist contempt of European leaders (most recently Gladstone) towards the Ottomans. Yet Kinross himself has admitted throughout his chronicles that the *Ottoman sultans had never married any Asian women through many centuries. In other words, the sultans over the past five centuries had European blood in their veins almost exclusively, with only the barest vestiges of Asian blood, just about the same proportion as did most European Christian royalty.*

But Abdul Hamid himself now attempted to stress his Islamic origins. He was desperately seeking some alliances he could count on and also garner "for the house of Osman the spiritual leadership of the whole Muslim world"<sup>153</sup> as the custodians of the sacred shrines of Islam. Much of the populace in the Muslim world felt it was too late for any Sultan to claim Islamic piety after centuries of infatuation with Christian powers. However, Abdul Hamid's decision to rule as an absolute monarch (just as some European monarchs still did) ensured for him, for the present, control over secular institutions of his empire. His religious fervor, however, won some support among the religious element, even though they too may have suspected it to be superficial. Now "his intelligentsia were indoctrinated with a belief in the superior culture of a medieval Islamic past. *The Young Ottomans, in relating their plans for reform and modernization to the institutions of Islam, had admitted that they were in fact derived from the West...The Hamidian line was that Arab civilization was the source of European civilization, which took over from Islam not only its constitutional system but Arab sciences and technology— algebra, chemistry and physics; such modern inventions as the compass and gunpowder; literature and the writing of history; everything indeed that was admired in the West. What then did the Moslems require from Europe, apart from a few inventions of their own upon which Europe had since tried to improve? A book repeating this thesis opened with the words 'The basis of contemporary civilization are nothing but the actions and traditions of Mohammed.'*"<sup>154</sup> Note the tone of Kinross' admission. The Young Ottomans "had admitted" but the "Hamidian line was that..."

In reality, by now, Europe had leaped far ahead of the Muslim world economically and technologically. There was the real problem of Muslim education in the European style being *culturally and spiritually* harmful, especially for young impressionable minds. On the other hand, reiterating Muslim superiority of centuries ago, as Abdul Hamid did, *did not make contemporary Muslims superior.* The harsh reality of Europe's new superiority had to be recognized first, even though Europe's refusal to acknowledge *where its knowledge began caused this anger.* But for the Muslim world's own interests, the true reasons for the decline in the Muslim world, foreign and domestic, should have been examined by those in power, to make constructive changes be made. But this was never done.

( 22 )

Towards the dawn of the 20th century, while Sultan Abdul Hamid made dramatic efforts to project himself as a true Muslim and a ruler who respected all the ethnic segments of the Empire, *this did not extend to mending bridges with Persia.* He appointed Circassian General Khair-ed-Din the Grand Vezir, departing from the normal practice of appointing Turks to this position. He also proclaimed himself "caliph to the services of all Sunni Moslems throughout Islam."<sup>155</sup> Now he also sought non-Turks for service in his court, even Muslims rather than Christians. "Arab sheikhs from far afield were especially honoured with their own quarters in the imperial Seraglio... the Sultan set himself to woo Moslem loyalty by concerning himself at home with the problems of Arabs, Kurds, Albanians and other Moslems on the Christian marches of his empire and abroad by displaying a solicitous interest in the Moslem peoples of countries far afield. The former Sick Man of Europe, back within his Islamic frontiers, now aspired to be the Strong Man of Asia. But in so doing he was to antagonize Europe...more than ever before" says Kinross. Of course he "antagonized Europe" in this by merely proclaiming himself a practicing Muslim.

Other Sultans in recent years had been shocked at what friends like Britain and France had done in critical situations. But Abdul Hamid understood that the European powers would always have a religious prejudice against Turkey and that they would encourage insurrections from the remaining Christian sections within the Empire. Did he realize that this religious prejudice was *always* essential for machiavellian colonialists? Probably not. Without it, their excesses might be called to question by the fairer elements in *their own countries.*

It was in this extremely tense milieu that there was now yet another uprising from a segment of the Ottoman Empire with a large Christian population. And Abdul Hamid was especially furious that this new insurrection came from the heart of Asia.

( 23 )

Armenia in the Middle Ages had played a very important role along with the Roman Church in wooing the fiery Mongols to join them in attacking the Muslim world in later Crusades. As a consequence of wars since then, old Armenia had ceased to exist as a nation for five hundred years, those territories divided between the Ottomans, Russia and Persia. Under current conditions, with other Christian territories receiving European support for their independence, the Armenians were tempted. While the majority of Armenians in the Turkish state were peasants, there was a substantial number who lived in cities as well. "In the sixteenth century, the Turks had relied heavily, in commerce, diplomacy and many fiscal matters on the Jews"<sup>156</sup> says Anthony Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey.* As in other parts of the Muslim world, Jews were relied upon more than any other ethnic or religious community, and financial sphere, they were the main beneficiaries. But

with the growing Western domination, "The Jewish community declined together with [the power of] the Ottoman Empire, and lost ground to the Greeks, Armenians and Syrian Christians."<sup>157</sup> The next stage was the growing power of the Armenians: "The influence of the Ottoman Greeks inevitably declined after the creation of the Greek kingdom. The chief beneficiaries were the Armenians."<sup>158</sup> But conditions were now very different. The Ottoman nation was in financial chaos, profits were being siphoned off more and more not to non-Muslim lenders within the nation, but to foreign (European) moneylenders. By now, "railways, tramways, ports, gas, electricity and water were all operated by foreign concessionaire companies."<sup>159</sup> *Educated Armenians, like other non-Muslims in the Turkish state, saw that their own prosperity depended upon extricating themselves from the dying Turkey, and seek independence.* Because they were Christians, with many centuries of alignment with Christian Europe, they were certain (and were probably assured) that they would have huge Western support.

American Protestant missionaries had also been permitted by recent Sultans to open schools where many Armenians were educated. "Kindling nationalist sentiment, this prompted their dispatch to the Congress of Berlin of an Armenian delegation, requesting the appointment of a Christian governor-general — as in the Lebanon since its autonomy in 1861 — to serve their interests in these eastern provinces."<sup>160</sup> There was now another incentive for the Armenian ferment: Gladstone was once again Prime Minister of Britain and was openly anti-Turk.

Of course, most European powers were quick to support this Armenian agitation; by the terms of the Berlin Treaty they argued that "the Porte was obliged to carry [reforms and guarantees] into effect, and periodically to report the steps it took to the [European] powers, who would superintend their application."<sup>161</sup>

Abdul Hamid knew that total rejection of this intrusion might provide the European powers the excuse to invade again. He agreed to appoint a Christian governor. But now Britain passed another series of demands through the Cyprus Convention, and used this as its authority to send British consuls to the Armenian provinces to report on progress of the reforms it demanded from the Porte (the Turkish government headquarters). The consuls reported that the Armenians were suffering at the hands of Kurdish tribes and demanded action from the Porte. The Porte made its own inquiries, reported that it was taking suitable action against wrong-doers, but also claimed that "whenever misdemeanors - which naturally occur in every country in the world - happen to be committed in Armenia, some over-zealous people appear to take it upon themselves to invent imaginary crimes in addition to the real offenses, and to represent them before the eyes of Europe and the [British] consuls on the spot as having actually occurred."<sup>162</sup>

Gladstone again made derogatory references to the Turks and to Islam. In 1882, he put more pressure on Turkey regarding Armenia, through the collective strength of the European powers "but this time it was thwarted from within their own ranks by Bismarck, who expressed readiness to cooperate with the British on any issue except that of pressing Armenian reforms."<sup>163</sup> Bismarck was convinced that Britain was exaggerating the Armenian issue for its own political and colonial

aspirations and this would not only lead to an international crisis, but might also prove harmful to the Armenians themselves if they were encouraged in their rebellion.

The Armenians in the Ottoman Empire were now in fact already sufficiently encouraged to form secret societies, with channels of communication with the Armenians under Russian rule, who also were rebelling and demanding self-government. In 1881, the Turkish Armenians formed an organization called Protectors of the Fatherland in Erzurum with the slogan "Liberty or Death." They formed a political party in Turkey affiliated to the Armenian Patriotic Society of Europe, with headquarters in London. They openly declared their objective was revolution, aimed at creating an Armenian state. This was followed in 1887 by the formation of "a more ruthless organization ... by Armenian emigres, on Marxist lines, in Geneva. Developing into the first revolutionary socialist party in the Ottoman empire, its objective was the establishment through revolution of a unified Armenian Socialist State carved out of Turkish territory."<sup>164</sup> Its journal *Hunchak*, and the party set up branches all over Europe, "together with agents as far afield as America." Next they began through their branches inside Turkey to organize "raids into Ottoman territory and gestures of defiance by *Hunchak* against Turkish authorities, not only in Erzurum 'the capital of Turkish Armenia' but as far westward as Istanbul and the other urban centers of Turkey. These activities culminated in the foundation in Tiflis, in 1890, of an Armenian Revolutionary Federation or *Dashnaktsutun*, whose adherents became known as Dasknaks... 'The Armenian' [journal] they went so far as to proclaim 'is no longer imploring. He now demands with gun in hand.'"<sup>165</sup>

Clearly the Armenians were certain that with Gladstone in power it was the right time to seek a separate state endowed with European support. *Disraeli, with his concerns about wooing Turkey's support for a Jewish mass migration and homeland, was much less belligerent* In the US, the public had very vague knowledge about Eastern Europe but being told that "Christian" Armenia was seeking freedom from "Muslim" Turkey and that the "barbarous Turks" (as Gladstone called them) were killing them, American money flowed into "Christian" Armenia, ignorant of the fact that much of the Armenian movement was *openly Marxist* in nature at this time.

To Britain and France, for more than one reason, an Armenian revolt was the perfect next step. The Armenians had their main strength in the *midst* of the Ottoman Asian domain, and serious disturbances within the empire at this geographic point would greatly help the European colonial powers in carving out portions to bring under their own political and economic suzerainty. Britain had already commenced and become greatly successful in this respect, by secretly promising Arab chieftains in the farther eastern segments of the Ottoman Empire, such as the Hejaz, in Kuwait and the rest of Mesopotamia, their own little states, if they joined Britain to defeat the Turks. In Persia, as we have seen, Russia and Britain had successfully crushed the nationalist movements, crowning it with the public display of strangled corpses to discourage any new demands for a democratic government. With these long-range seductive potentials in the East, and owning the entire Indian sub-continent now, Britain was not too keen on any military action on behalf of the



Armenians. But short of that, it was very keen to encourage this tumult in the heart of Ottoman Asia.

Sultan Abdul Hamid knew this. He was at a stage of desperation, reportedly a pathological stage of paranoia where he felt driven to desperation. As the Armenians now commenced raids in central and western Anatolia, Abdul Hamid found he was incapable of controlling these series of insurrection with the regular armed forces. He formed a militia among the Kurdish tribes called the *Hamadie*, the "men of the Sultan" to put down these rebellions in rural areas where the regular forces could not reach. "In 1893 the Armenian revolutionaries went beyond raids with a plot to stir up a Moslem revolt...the only result was the arrest and imprisonment of large numbers of Armenians throughout Anatolia."<sup>166</sup> Non-payment of taxes by the Armenians now also led to a fiery attack upon the Armenians, which was later reported in the European press as one of inhuman brutality, claiming that Armenian men women and children were slaughtered indiscriminately. Britain, France and Russia demanded in 1895 that a "commission of inquiry" be set up to review this massacre. Foretelling this, the sultan himself set up such an inquiry into the retaliation by his forces as well as "to enquire into the criminal conduct of Armenian brigands." However, Abdul Majid's findings were dismissed in London and in Paris as cosmetics. The sultan's emissaries were told the types of reforms demanded by the European powers

Knowing that the Muslims in the Empire were unhappy too, and had already revolted in the past, the Armenians now sought to encourage Muslim subjects of the empire to another revolt. Such a Muslim insurrection, the Armenian leaders felt, would divert Ottoman forces into various directions. The plan backfired. The Porte and some of the *Ulema*, it is reported, now sought to remind the Muslim masses of history of the role the Armenians had played against the Muslim world, dating back to the time when the Armenia King had, in consort with the Pope, gone to the Mongol generals after the Mongol invasion and devastation of Muslim lands, inviting the Mongols to join with the Pope and the European powers to launch yet another holocaust upon the Muslims.

"The Armenians themselves, led by the *Hanchaks*, staged a demonstration as they marched through the city of Istanbul... the demonstrators got out of hand"<sup>167</sup> admits Kinross. They chanted "Liberty or Death", sang revolutionary songs. The police charged, reports Kinross, along with "fanatical Muslim elements" with clubs. Along with this came news of other insurrections, including a massacre of rebellious Armenians in Trebizond. European accounts later claimed that not only were there massacres of Armenians in various parts of the empire by the police and the Kurdish irregulars, but by Muslim citizens as well, aroused to a fever-pitch of anger. Murder, rape and looting were endemic, said media. Some of Europe's press even claimed that Abdul Hamid had his forces offer many Armenians "the choice between death and the forcible conversion to Islam" reports Kinross. How could any rational mind believe that the vulnerable Turkish regime would invite further disaster not only from Europe by offering "forcible conversion to Islam" at this stage, but also draw condemnation from all truly religious Muslims as Islam forbade forced conversion? And why?

In 1895 there were, according to Western reports, massacres of huge numbers of Armenians, some even after they had pleaded for forgiveness. Turkish and Muslim historians accounts of course differ diametrically from what the European historians and media have claimed. But in keeping with the decision here to draw on events from European accounts exclusively, the European version is *all* we must consider here. The Armenians, *even by European accounts*, were not entirely blameless, in their own activities in 1895. For instance, in Cilicia, a large Armenian force "defeated a Turkish force in battle...captured four hundred Turkish prisoners, and changing into Turkish uniforms [in order that the Turks could later be blamed for the massacre] looted and burned a neighbouring Turkish town" reports Kinross<sup>168</sup>. Soon thereafter, in Istanbul, Armenians were entreating both the Sultan and European powers for an amnesty, and "it was agreed with the authorities that all in the district, whether Turk or Armenian, should surrender their arms."<sup>169</sup> *Instead, in August 1896, an Armenian group entered the Ottoman Bank in Istanbul heavily armed and announced they had not only guns but bombs and dynamite. They announced they were Armenian patriots. The Bank Manager, Englishman Sir Edgar Vincent. Eventually through the Russian embassy, the Porte agreed to a deal allowing the "Armenian patriots" to escape unharmed. What was most significant was that "they proceeded quietly on board Sir Edgar Vincent's yacht, later to be conveyed into exile in France."*<sup>170</sup> When this bank terrorism by the Armenians and their rescue by the British became known, the Turkish public stormed the Armenian quarters of the capital the next day and attacked Armenians mercilessly. The European powers insisted that the Porte was responsible for the attack on the Armenians. They ordered their marines to Istanbul, along with an ultimatum to the sultan, "demanding an immediate end to the massacre." The nervous sultan punished some of the rioters but also offered evidence that the Armenians had instigated the riots, says Kinross.

Gladstone was not Prime Minister now, but he now emerged to attack "the unspeakable Turk" whose empire deserved to be 'rubbed off the map' as a 'disgrace to civilization' and 'a curse on mankind.'<sup>171</sup> The Turkish government and media tried desperately to offer its version of what had happened throughout the Armenian uprising, but European media ignored their version entirely. The Ottoman Empire was now branded a 'disgrace to civilization' and 'a curse on mankind' for the remainder of its existence, and the stage was set for its final extinction without arousing any sympathy in the West, with one exception. One European monarch seemed sympathetic. That was Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm II.

## Chapter 19

## A Writhing Lamb to the Slaughter

(1)

In 1888, Wilhelm II had succeeded to the German throne. Chancellor Bismarck had shown no interest in Turkey. But now, as the Sultan was totally disenchanted with former "friends" Britain and France, he had sought Germany's assistance to modernize the Turkish military. So Germany had sold military hardware to Turkey since 1883, and its officers now trained Turkish forces.

Kaiser Wilhelm, unlike Bismarck, wanted closer ties with Turkey. To the dismay of Britain and France, Germany obtained a concession through Germany's Deutsche Bank to expand on the railways network which Turkey had been so keen to complete, to facilitate movements of goods and public travel all across its widespread empire. By the 1890s there was a huge influx of German financiers, merchants, engineers and other technical specialists. Then Wilhelm decided to visit Istanbul. The delighted sultan planned for it on a lavish style. He even had a small palace built especially for the visit of Wilhelm and his Empress, and entertained them with a series of banquets, punctuated with costly gifts. The relationship between the two rulers grew so close that Kaiser Wilhelm decided nine years later to visit Turkey again. This time he visited Istanbul and went to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage, inaugurated a Lutheran Church there with the Sultan's blessings. He visited Damascus, donned Turkish clothes there and paid homage at Saladin's tomb. And he made an emotional speech of respect for Islam and promised Germany's "eternal protection" to all Muslims.

The Muslim world had never heard such praise for their religion from any Western leader since Napoleon's *Nous sommes les vrais Musulmans* ("In essence, we are all really Muslims"). The British and the French were furious. They accused Germany of attempting to win the Muslim world over as allies in case there was a

war! "The whole idea of a Mohammedan participation in a great war on our side was simply fantastic. This line of thought arose from the Kaiser's famous speech in Damascus, which caused such an unpleasant sensation in France and England."<sup>1</sup> wrote Germany's Prof. Brandenburg later. But to the Muslim world, the voicing of such sentiments by the Kaiser meant a lot. Later, as we have seen, the Persian nationalists, under the military onslaught of the Russian-British alliance, had recalled the Kaiser's comments and appealed for Germany's intervention. But it never came. Instead, according to Shuster, Germany had signed an agreement of non-interference with Russia.

Germany had therefore never intended to provide "eternal protection" to Muslims. However friendship, no matter how superficial, between Germany and Turkey, angered Britain, France and Russia, now the new "Triple Entente". They saw Germany as a nuisance to their own colonial plans. During the Kaiser's second visit to Turkey, Germany was granted a new concession for the next stage in developing the Baghdad Railway, i.e., its extension towards the Persian Gulf. In 1903 Britain's Lord Balfour blocked that. He "publicly declared that England would do her utmost to prevent the construction of a fortified harbour on the Persian Gulf by any other Power. In 1906 he refused his consent to a three percent increase in the customs duty planned by Turkey, because it was feared in London that the increased revenue would be diverted to form a subvention to the Baghdad railway. England also hoped to obtain from Turkey a concession for a rival line," writes Prof. Erich Brandenburg.<sup>2</sup> Britain had already secured control of the Suez Canal. But Britain and Russia now saw that with German Kaiser and the Ottoman Sultan in their new "special relationship" they would not obtain further economic gains from the Ottomans with seduction, but only by force. So London directed Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, to obtain a firm commitment from the sheikhs of Kuwait and Oman (with whom Britain had already established links) whereby these chieftains would never enter into any agreements with any government without Britain's permission. And Russia used her muscle to obtain a "Black Sea Agreement" that railway concessions in northern Anatolia and Persia could only be granted to Russian commercial interests and even then only with the permission of the Tsar. As in other remarkable concessions European powers obtained from leaders in the Muslim world, "female persuasion" was reportedly used fully.

In his new role as a Muslim leader, Sultan Abdul Hamid won favor in the Muslim world by completing the Hejaz railway independently of any European sponsorship. This railway, originating in Damascus, would join Mecca and Medina by rail and thereby reduce the hardships of travel for pilgrims arriving from around the world. It was in fact a project "financed exclusively by contributions from the world of Islam and constructed by Muslim labor."<sup>3</sup> The railway was completed as far as Medina in 1908.

Britain, France and Russia decided that the time was ripe now to complete the destruction of the Ottoman Empire. Austria-Hungary had, with the help of a "secret treaty" with Russia, taken over Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, but the Porte was showing signs of a new vigor, with German support. Germany voiced



its opposition to the disintegration of the remnants of the Turkish State. The other three major Christian powers condemned Germany with pious horror for being a Christian country that disagreed with freedom for Christian-majority areas like the Crete island from Muslim Turkey. The colonial powers found themselves somewhat embarrassed when the Greek government, despite encouragement from Britain, was reluctant to become involved in seeking Crete's independence from Turkey. Then, "coincidentally", in 1896, a civil war ensued between Cretan Christians and Muslims. The Christians asked for help from the Christian world, Greece was induced to send troops to fight the Turkish forces sent by the sultan. Germany and now even Russia objected to Greek intervention, and "pressed for a Greek withdrawal." But Britain's pressure was greater, and finally Turkey was forced to accept Crete's autonomy.

Now segments within Greece were encouraged to a full-scale war against Turkey. And so "in the spring of 1897, Greece declared war on Turkey. A mere Thirty Days' War, [but] it was a disaster for Greece."<sup>14</sup> While the Turks won, they did not extract any heavy penalties from Greece other than "financial indemnity." In fact by the peace treaty signed six months later, Turkey agreed even to withdraw from both Thessaly and Epirus. In Crete "Germany and Austria, still upholding the Sultan, *defected from the concert of the [western] powers in protest of [against] their Philhellenic policy*"<sup>15</sup> but Britain and France prevailed. Crete was made autonomous, though still technically under Turkish suzerainty. The Turks had even installed a Christian governor in Crete years earlier, but now Prince George of Greece was installed as governor. The restoration of "Cretan freedom for the first time since the Roman conquest, nineteen hundred earlier"<sup>16</sup> was soon being celebrated in European newspapers.

One European province left within Ottoman control was Macedonia. This was "a polyglot of overlapping races and languages and religions."<sup>17</sup> In the 1890s, the sultan had permitted the creation of seven new Bulgarian bishops and the Serbs were also now permitted their own bishopric. "To add to the conflict between the Greek and the Slav churches, was the growing Bulgarian nationalism, and the Albanian Muslims attempting to get their own identity."<sup>18</sup>

Now "bands of Bulgarian bandits roamed the mountain, attacking Turkish villages and in their turn were attacked by Greek bandits."<sup>19</sup> It was these bandits who were the main supporters of Europe's instigations against Turkish rule. Turkish irregular forces attempted to enforce order but banditry and chaos prevailed until 1903. Turkey sent reinforcements, and appointed an inspector-general to establish law and order. "Neither Germany and Austria favored the prospect of an autonomous Macedonia"<sup>20</sup> and even Russia felt it may be too dangerous to its own interests to create this new entity.

But distant Britain encouraged Macedonian independence, and did so in the name of Christianity. Britain proposed "reforms which gave more power to the Christian community under a Christian governor and the withdrawal of Turkish irregular forces."<sup>21</sup> How this "Christian" proposal would solve the hostility between the Slav and Greek Christians, which had been at the core of the problem, was not

explained by Britain, but Germany and Austria were prevailed upon to agree to at least a more modest form of the British proposal. Turkey, finding itself with no ally on this issue, had to submit. But the execution of this "Murzsteg" proposal (as it came to be called) was fraught with problems. The British accused Turkey of deliberate delays. In 1908 the British demanded that the Turkish governor of Macedonia should be appointed by the European powers and that there should be European agents who must "assist" him in the further implementation of the Murzsteg reforms, but that these European agents should be *paid by Turkey*. France and Russia sided with Britain, and the three blockaded Turkish customs houses until Turkey agreed. It agreed.

By now either because he was afraid of the Christian powers accusing him of favoritism, or because he did not care, the Sultan had been cruelly neglectful of the well-being of the Muslim subjects in the Balkans, especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina even before they were taken by Austria-Hungary. They were impatient and angry. And this discontent and anger was spreading throughout the Ottoman State. There was a growing conviction among Muslims that the Sultan was being blatantly used by the European powers to favor the Christians and neglect the Muslims. Some felt that Muslim unity was critical to defend the empire and the Sultan against the brutal exploitation by Christian Europe. Yet other Muslim groups felt the solution lay in the modernization on the European lines, with particular emphasis on secularism, (*i.e., distancing government from Islam*) which would help the empire because it would make the West friends of Turkey rather than its enemies.

## (2)

It was the secular group that had recently gained prominence. The students, who had been educated in the recently modernized system under French educators in Turkey and those who had been educated in France and lived in Paris, were the leaders of the Young Turks. Drawing inspiration from the 1789 French revolution and the new system now in place in France, the "Young Turks" named for a journal in Paris called *Le Jeune Turquie* and another called *Mesheret* ("Consultation") meant for the home market, which was secretly smuggled into Turkey. A plot in 1896 to overthrow the sultan was abortive, and many were arrested and exiled. But the Committee of Union and Progress, announced loudly and often that they stood for secular government and equal rights for all races and religions.

So the Young Turks, more secular than the Young Ottomans of old, had wide appeal in Europe. They told fellow-Turks that Europe only opposed Turkey's religion of Islam. Therefore, if this religious affiliation could be divorced completely from government, then the European powers would become genuine friends. And if, in the process, they could remove the Sultan, now so disliked by the British, the French and the Russian, that was even better.

On the face of it, the Young Turk movement seemed to make a lot of sense, especially if Europe had become a *genuine* friend. But of that there was no hope as

Europe colonial powers were not some idealistic conglomeration of nations. Would Turkey have been better served if it had made a different, drastic decision over recent decades? *Could it have offered territories with Christian majority a "divorce", created a Commonwealth of Muslims states instead?* Europe would certainly have rejected such a move as a threat of Muslim insurgency.

## (3)

The offices of the radical Young Turks soon spread to various European capitals. A prominent cell of this organization was now established in the Balkans, at Solanika. It was from here that the revolution took on a more powerful and different dimension. "In Solanika the vigorous Committee of Union and Progress, enlisting covert support from organized groups of Freemason, Jews and Donmehs (Jews turned Moslem), was more practical in its effect than the organization in Paris, with which it merged in 1907."<sup>12</sup> By 1908, when the English King and the Russian Tsar met to enforce autonomy for the province, there was now support in Macedonia for reforms, "the principles of Freedom and Fatherland, the Constitution and the Nation."<sup>13</sup>

There were demands from the rebels everywhere in the empire for the revival of the constitution. The Young Turks movement was gathering other dissident groups within its ranks. Its leaders Enver Bey and Niyazi Bey created fortresses in the hills with arsenals of ammunition and arms. The Sultan sent a force to confront the rebels; his commander General Shemsi Pasha was shot dead. Other officers were also killed. Now even the Albanians, hitherto loyal to the Sultan, joined the opposition. The movement demanded Abdul Hamid's abdication and his replacement by his young son. Abdul Hamid sought the *Ulema* to ask that as the opposition consisted of a lot of non-Muslims but also many Muslims, would they support him if he faced them militarily? The *Ulema* were apparently more sincere than those who had blindly supported past Sultans. They said no, the main demand of the rebels so far, i.e., the revival of the constitution, was a *legitimate* demand. The sultan consulted his personal advisors, then announced that the constitution was once more in force. Parliament, dissolved in 1877, was to be recalled.

There was much jubilation across the empire. Sultan Abdul Majid's image improved among his subjects. In Macedonia, Enver Bey claimed victory and announced "Henceforth we are all brothers. There are no longer Bulgars, Greeks, Roumans, Jews, Moslems; under the same blue sky we are all equal, we glory in being Ottomans."<sup>14</sup> Leaders and followers of various faiths embraced emotionally. "In one city, the president of the Bulgarian committee embraced the Greek archbishop; in another the officers of the revolution imprisoned a [Muslim] Turk for insulting a Christian. *A joint congregation of [Muslim] Turks and Armenians in a Christian cemetery echoed the prayers of their respective priests in a memorial service for the victims of the Armenian massacres.*...For several days the rejoicing continued, with organized carriage processions in which Turkish mullahs, Jewish rabbis, and the prelates of discordant Christian faiths sat side by side in

fraternization... Moslems and Christians in succession would rise with hands outstretched in prayer, calling upon the One God to preserve the constitution and praising Him for its blessings of liberty. But they invoked also blessings on the Sultan himself."<sup>15</sup>

Abdul Majid went for Friday prayers to the great Mosque of Abu Sofya, "which he had not entered for a quarter century"<sup>16</sup> (italics added). And he did proceed "to open his newly elected Parliament of all races and creeds. Here for Turkey was surely the dawn of a blessed millennium."<sup>17</sup>

## (4)

Turkey seemed now on the verge of a harmonious turn for the better. But that would not have served the colonial powers, who now decided they should deal the final fatal blow to the Turkish state. So, despite the remarkable "new dawn", Balkan rebels decided to break away from Turkey, a move that its inhabitants themselves did not realize was aimed to take away "any claims to constitutional privileges." Those privileges would have applied to all the subjects of the Turkish State. But Bulgarian rebels "declared her complete independence, proclaiming Prince Ferdinand 'Tsar of the Bulgarians' in the style of the medieval Bulgarian empire. Crete proclaimed its decision to unite with Greece."<sup>18</sup>

Austria-Hungary moved in to create its own provocation. With the connivance of Russia (first denied by the latter but proven by historians in years to come) and very shortly after the meeting in Solanika between the British and Russian monarchs, Austria-Hungary simply ignored the Treaty of Berlin and announced that Bosnia-Herzegovina now *belonged* to Austria-Hungary. The intention was clear. The new unity between nationalities and religions in the Ottoman State, which prevailed in Bosnia, "the dawn of a new blessed millennium" was abhorrent to colonial Europe. If it was allowed to blossom, the Ottoman State might become strong and unified again, and not available for dismemberment. Soon there were reports of atrocities towards the Muslims by segments of Serbs in Bosnia.

Noting the huge support within the Turkish State for the "New Turkey", some of the European press, even some in the British press, took the lead in denouncing Austria-Hungary's brazen contempt for law, and demanded that their own governments act to force Austria-Hungary to rescind its illegal annexation. But European leaders "disapproval" of the Austrian action, was no more than a token gesture. Turkey's ruler knew it. "On Dec 17, 1908 Sultan Abdul Hamid drove through the streets, a bent, huddled figure in an overcoat, with an ashen complexion, to open the new Parliament...In his opening speech... he affirmed 'an absolute and unalterable decision to govern according to the constitution.'<sup>19</sup>

But all hopes of stability and reforms were quickly dashed. The blatant seizure by Austria-Hungary and reports of brutality towards the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina caused fury among a segment of Muslims who were convinced that no matter what how many concessions they made, Christian Europe was determined to destroy Islam. Shortly after the opening of Parliament, there was now a powerful



reaction from them under the banner of "The Society of Muhammad", demanding that Islamic Law should replace the new secular constitution. Western "orientalists" were convinced that this "counter-revolution" was engineered by Abdul Hamid himself. In April 1909 the First Army Corps mutinied in Istanbul "where they called for the restoration of the Sacred Law." These "counter-revolutionaries" gained some support from the public, but their successes were temporary. The Committee sent Third Army forces to subdue the insurrection, and to punish the "Sacred Law" rebel leaders. Canon was used against the "counter-revolutionaries."<sup>20</sup> "Thanks to the use of cannon [they] were reduced within five hours." Those who were not killed were "marched through the streets of Istanbul"<sup>21</sup> says Kinross. The Sultan's own personal retinue were also ordered to march humbly with them as prisoners.

The National Assembly next demanded that the Grand Mufti (Sheikh-ul-Islam) must declare what Islamic law said about a ruler who had transgressed upon the subjects, misappropriated public money, killed and tortured subjects. The Grand Mufti agreed that such a ruler could be deposed. Representatives of the Assembly then proceeded to the palace. Abdul Hamid "emerged from behind a screen, holding the hand of his twelve-year old son"<sup>22</sup> to be told that he was deposed. His brother Reshad was now Sultan. Abdul Majid asked if he would be executed, and was told Parliament would decide that. He was in fact interred at a little villa in Solanika with his two sons.

In his reforms earlier, Abdul Hamid had made new advances in communication "through the telegraph, the railroad and the printing press, a modern framework within which Turkey was now free to evolve as it chose". And he had advanced and encouraged education and brought "to maturity a new breed of Turk, comprising not only soldiers and civil servants but such professional classes as doctors, teachers, journalists, merchants and manufacturers", from whom, ironically, had emerged the Young Turk revolutionaries.<sup>23</sup>

"The Committee of Union and Progress were now masters of the Empire" said Kinross<sup>24</sup>. They declared Martial Law and Shevket Pasha, the army general "proclaimed a state of siege" on behalf of the Committee for two years. The Sultan's powers were curtailed drastically so that the Committee and its appointed Grand Vizier had veto powers over him in most directions. The Young Turks were more feverishly pro-Europe, middle-class, secular, cosmopolitan but more *nationalistic* than the Young Ottomans of the past "The concept of Pan-Islamism, springing from Abdul Hamid's attempt at Asian unity, had been a short-lived growth"<sup>25</sup> and had been now crushed. A leading Young Turk poet Mehmed Emin, now proudly proclaimed "I am a Turk, my faith and my race are mighty" and "We are Turks. With this blood and with this name we live."<sup>26</sup> They emphasized their "Turkism" or "Turo-Aryan" ethnicity, seeking to form "unity through ethnic kinship and in eventual political terms between all Turkish-speaking peoples, not only across Central Asia as far as Mongolia and China, but across Russia into Europe, through Hungary and kindred states."<sup>27</sup> Religion was not important. Enver, one of the three leaders of the movement, was Jewish. *But why was ethnicity critical in*

*this "democratic" government?* There were dissensions between the governing Committee and its supporters, the Turkish Hearths, "non-political clubs" Individual ambitions were coming to the fore along with xenophobia and ethnic hysteria.<sup>28</sup>

In 1911, an opposition party called the New Party became a force. It argued that while European advances in some ways were critical to emulate, the traditional and historic Islamic values must be preserved along with "religious and national ethics and morals." Soon the opposition parties were to merge into the Party of Liberal Union, under the leadership of Damad Ferid Pasha. But The Committee of Union and Progress used brazen tactics to win the election. The Committee dissolved Parliament in 1912; in the ensuing first general election, it "shamelessly manipulated, through bribes, concessions, the restriction of opposition meetings...to ensure for itself a landslide."<sup>29</sup> The Party of Liberal Union was crushed. Dubbed the "big-stick election" by the public, the Committee won but lost a lot of public support. Dissensions grew, a new group of "Savior Officers" came into prominence, leading to the resignation of the Cabinet, the dissolution of the Parliament and to new elections.

## (5)

This internal turmoil in Turkey tempted Europe's new colonialists. Italy was now a nation since 1871. Watching other European powers colonizing, it hungered for some of the spoils out of the crumbling Turkish Empire. So Italy aimed for Tunisia and Libya. On Sept 28, 1911, the Italian government claimed, with a straight face, that the conditions in these provinces of the Turkish State were a danger to Italian subjects in them, and therefore Italy demanded that the Turks must give up these provinces to Italy within twenty-four hours. The Porte, recognizing its own weakness, sought through conciliatory gestures to appease Italy with special economic privileges. It was to no avail. The next day, Italy declared war on Turkey. Egypt, with Britain's encouragement, claimed neutrality and *refused to allow Turkish forces to cross its territories to reach the North African coast*. Italy quickly occupied the ports. The North African Arab desert tribes, recognizing Turkey's plight sought to help by resisting the Italian invaders. Italy saw this as justification to bombard Beirut and Smyrna, bombarded Turkish forts on the Dardanelles. Now Turkey was afraid the Russians, always willing to find ways to enter the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, would invade as well. In desperation, Turkey sued for peace and in the peace treaty that followed, Oct 18, 1912, surrendered Tripolitania and Libya to Italy.<sup>30</sup>

The Balkan League, comprising of Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece sought legitimacy for their aspirations by pronouncing they wished to liberate Christians from Turkish rule. This was the magic formula, which always won European support, even though now in Turkey there was a government of members of *all religions*, which had in its constitution *equality of all religions*. Public opinion in Turkey was now strongly against any more submissions to the Balkan menace, and when the Balkan League's demands were not met, they declared war on Turkey. It was a disastrous war for Turkey. Aside from being heavily outnumbered by the

Balkan League troops, the Turkish forces now included - from the recent reforms - many Christians. *And many of these Christians "were sympathetic to the enemy's cause" as the Balkan forces claimed to be fighting for Christianity.*<sup>31</sup> The "invincible Turks" were now losing every battle and sued for peace.

The European powers decided to become the grand arbitrators, in effect insisting that the Turks give in to every demand of the Greeks, the Serbs and the Bulgarians. There were dissensions among leadership in Turkey, whether to submit to these demands or not. When it seemed that the Kemal Pasha regime might actually be willing to surrender to all these demands, the former Committee of Union & Progress members, led by Enver, conducted a *coup*. They "shot dead the Minister of War, Nizam Pasha, forced at gun point the resignation of Kamil Pasha."<sup>32</sup> The Committee, back in power, rejected the demands being made upon Turkey, and war broke out again. But the Turkish forces were again vulnerable, without unity, and suffered defeats on all fronts. The final resolution left Turkey with little in Europe, just a few Aegean islands and Albania in the balance.

The Balkan League allies, intoxicated with their victories, each sought to grab more of the newly won territories for themselves. Bulgaria wanted Solanika, which the Greeks had captured, Serbia felt it should get a lot more of the Turkish territories than Bulgaria or Greece, and Greece felt it was entitled to the southern portion of Macedonia. Greece and Serbia formed an alliance against Bulgaria and war broke out on June 30, 1913, which history books call the "Second Balkan War". *"The First Balkan War" was fought by them against Turkey.*

Now these Balkan states, sought every means to garner territories, by fair or foul means. Rumania, which felt disgruntled that the European Powers had given it less Turkish territory than they had to the other Balkan states, declared war on the other Balkan states. The Rumanians were routed and forced to give up even part of the conquered Turkish territory they held. Through the Treaty of Bucharest, Serbia gained an even larger share of Macedonia than it had already taken, as did Greece, Rumania came away with its own slice. Turkey, noting that this time her enemies were busy fighting each other in their greed, joined in the fray and was able to recover Adrianople, and a part of Eastern Thrace.

"From now on, the Young Turks of the Committee of Union and Progress reigned supreme over the Empire, establishing an authority as absolute as that of [deposed Sultan] Abdul Hamid...through an efficient and ruthless triumvirate."<sup>33</sup> Initially there were five who held complete control over the Empire. Enver, was reportedly the son of a railway porter who after coming into power, married an Ottoman princess and took for himself the title of "Damad" (son-in-law) as well as Pasha. Jemal Pasha was a strong military man, in charge of the armed forces, in various capacities, including army commander in Syria "where he ruled in the autocratic style of a dynastic prince." There was Talaat Pasha, "who took pride in his peasant origins", considered the ablest of the leaders. There was Javid, also of Jewish parentage, but who had converted to Islam. And finally, Prince Said Halim of the Egyptian Khedives, with the necessary background and sophistication to be a good conduit with Europe, was made Grand Vizier.

The traditionally powerful appointment of Sheikh-ul-Islam or Grand Mufti, the highest religious authority, was given by the Committee not to any member of the established religious order but to Mustafa Hayri Bey, who was outside the "religious elite", wore no turban, and had been involved for years in secular, political movements. In effect there was no Sultan, and in effect, no Grand Mufti. *From this point on, the Sultan was even less than the usual figurehead.*

The new leaders took advice from foreigners and accelerated "modernization" in education, public services; the judicial system was made secular. By now women had commenced studying at the universities as well. There was growing reliance on Germany for military training, as Enver was greatly impressed with them. In January 1914, Enver took over as War Minister, and proceeded to sack many of the older higher-ranked officers. A German Major-General Liman von Sanders was invited to take charge of Turkish First Fleet Army Corps, protecting Istanbul.

## (6)

A sinister event received no publicity, just a mention in history books. *This was a very secret alliance between Britain and Russia, the "diplomatic revolution" signed in Reval by the Tsar of Russia and King Edward VII of England in 1907, the provisions of which were not known but the brutal consequences of which were already evident to the inhabitants of Persia.*<sup>34</sup>

As a counterbalance to the Triple Entente there was the Triple Alliance between Germany, Austria and Italy. While tiptoeing around these "diplomatic" land-mines, the new Turkish leadership was as keen as ever to be accepted by Western Europe. Turkey still fervently hoped that Britain in particular would now become a good friend of secular, democratic Turkey, which it had always demanded. But they were in for a surprise. While Britain always claimed to want "modernization" in Turkey, and voiced support for this democratic change in Turkey, it feared *"its possible example to Britain's Moslem subjects in India"* writes Kinross. *The Indians might get ideas of a free democracy of their own!* "In November 1908, the Young Turks sent two high-level emissaries to London to propose an Anglo-Turkish alliance, which they hoped would be joined by France."<sup>35</sup> Sir Edward Grey, Britain Foreign Secretary, was not interested. "A similar approach was made [by Turkey] in July 1909, after the counter-revolution, through a Turkish parliamentary delegation concerned to counterbalance German influence."<sup>36</sup> This too was rejected by Britain.

## (7)

Britain had strengthened its control upon some of the local tribal Arab leaders, in what remained of the Turkish Empire, now called "The Sick Man of Asia." Britain sought to make friends and allies of the Serbs, which was fiercely opposed to Turkey and had a very large military force. Serbia was intoxicated with its Big Power friendships (Russia was already a close ally). The lands it had captured in



the First and Second Balkan Wars were not enough. Like Bulgaria, Serbia greed was unbounded. It wanted a "Greater" Serbia of its own design.

Turkey's new secular leaders were disappointed at Britain's rejection of an alliance with Turkey. In June, 1913, they tried again. "Tewfik Pasha, as Grand Vezir, reopened with Grey the question of an Anglo-Turkish alliance."<sup>37</sup> Grey firmly declined. In fact, noting Turkey eagerness for a defense treaty with Britain, Britain held secretly talks with Germany, Austria, France and Italy on how best the European powers could use Turkey's desperation and thereby carve out of "Asiatic Turkey zones of economic influence...leading to the ultimate political partition of Asiatic, as already...[achieved in] European Turkey."<sup>38</sup> In other words, Britain proposed secretly to other European powers that, instead of competing against one another, they could come to an understanding on how best to divide the rich spoils of Asiatic Turkey. No written agreement is known to have been reached between these powers on this vital matter (as there had been between the monarchs of Britain and Germany regarding Persia in 1907), though agreement was achieved regarding Germany's railway program in Turkey. "Germany retained the right to exploit it, with all its accompanying commercial implications in the Anatolian and Cilician sectors. But it was agreed that it should not proceed beyond the planned terminus of Basra. This safeguarded Britain's imperial interests in the river valleys of Mesopotamia and in the Persian Gulf."<sup>39</sup>

Despite this agreement, Britain, France and Russia privately shared a belief that Germany's growing power must be crushed. In France the political and social turbulence of the past decades, notably the first major communist movement anywhere in the world, that of the Paris Commune of 1871, had threatened to spread around the country, but it was finally defeated and ruthlessly crushed by President Thiers, with 20,000 Communards executed in one "bloody Week" in May. There were other disturbances within France shortly thereafter — the Boulanger "chauvinism," the Panama Canal Scandal (which involved the French government) the Dreyfus affair, the Church's fury at new laws depriving it of much of its extensive land holdings. French Premier Poincaré and his government felt the internal unrest and the growing power of the Left (who demanded better relations with Germany) and the Radical Party (which suggested a French-German banking consortia to ensure such peace) could best be controlled through a major foreign crisis. Poincaré spent heavily in 1912-13 on the military, clearly with the intent to prepare for war.

The murder of Austrian Archduke Ferdinand by the Serbs provided that opportunity. In Britain, hysteria had already been built from the turn of the century with powerful rightwing politicians and major newspapers forecasted an impending war with Germany and Muslims states in which Britain, they told a nervous public, would be caught unawares. They demanded a massive military buildup. By this time, with growing literacy — at least among the new middle and the upper classes — the propaganda value of the written word in media had been discovered and used in Western Europe. In Britain, fear and hate of foreigners, of Germany, Turkey and "The Mad Mullahs" of Persia, in particular, (the British government had worked

hard to equate the politically-active Persian *Ulema* with the devil) had been firmly implanted. This hysteria reached a cleverly orchestrated crescendo when Field Marshall Roberts (of the militant National Service League) and William Le Queux published *The Invasion of 1910*, whose frightening scenario of an invasion of England achieved record sales and huge public panic. It was eventually translated into 27 languages. Years before, Le Queux had published another book, *The Great War in England in 1897*. This rightwing propaganda campaign of recent years, through books and media reports had been treated with contempt by the intelligentsia. But as Lord Northcliffe (a political ally and patron of Roberts and Le Queux) and his *Daily Mail* led the others with forecasts of doom for an unprepared England, the cumulative impact of such propaganda, led to the huge success of *The Invasion of 1910* even beyond the expectations of rightwing hawks.

Britain, now considered the most powerful empire in the world, did not intend to let Germany become a major competitor. But Britain's cash flow was very limited. So Britain pressured the US for more money and when the US government was unwilling to provide all that Britain wanted, it got the money from Wall Street through financier J.P.Morgan, a passionate Anglophile.

Turkey had, as we have seen, pleaded with Britain several times for an alliance. Its main fear was that the newly created Balkan States, especially Serbia, were clearly obsessed with expanding their territories and would continue to provoke a war with the weakened Turks, unless one of the major powers had treaty agreements with Turkey to defend its borders against such invasions. Russia offered an alliance now, but Turkey had gnawing doubts. Nevertheless, Talaat went to St. Petersburg in May 1914 to discuss the alliance with Russia. In the meanwhile, Jemal went to Paris, where he pleaded again that France and Britain should join their Triple Alliance partner (Russia) in a defense treaty with Turkey. But France and Britain both refused. "For the sixth and last time Turkey's plea for an alliance with the Western powers had failed."<sup>40</sup> Turkey's young leaders felt if France and Britain were unwilling to aid Turkey in the event of a Slav invasion, Russia certainly would not do so. They decided the only course open to them was to turn to Germany, the only European Power that had condemned even the first invasion of Turkish lands by Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria.

So thirty-two year old Enver Pasha went to Germany to sign an alliance treaty.

## Chapter 20

# Double Burial: Wilson and Civilizing Values

(1)

On June 28, 1914, Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria and his wife were assassinated while they drove through the streets of Sarajevo, Bosnia. It was found later that the assassination was pre-planned by a Serbian terrorist organization, with links to the highest government officials of Serbia. They were shot first en route, *survived*, but were driven by the same route "accidentally" the same day. This time they were shot dead. Serbia was evidently determined to create a crisis which could lead to war in which its usual ally, Russia and through it, Britain and France, could be drawn in, leading to Serbia gaining its objective of a Greater Serbian state. The unilateral occupation by Austria-Hungary of Bosnia-Herzegovina had thwarted this objective and Serbia was now determined to create an "incident."

Austria demanded the surrender of the assassins. Serbia refused. Austria accused the Serbian government of being behind the assassination or to prove its innocence by punishing the guilty. Receiving no response, Austria delivered an ultimatum to Serbia. Russia, Britain and France *could* have demanded that Serbia, their protégé, submit the assassins to justice. Instead Britain chose to condemn the *tone* of Austria's ultimatum. On July 28 Austria declared war on Serbia.

British history textbooks claim that Germany had made no efforts to restrain Austria. German historians, including academics, then and later, insist that Germany had tried its best. In the preface of his book *From Bismarck to the World War*, published (in translation) by Oxford University in 1927, Professor Erich Brandenburg is bitter and very emotional: "At Versailles, [after the War] Germany was compelled to sign an admission of guilt because the victors *required* such justification for their exorbitant demands. It was necessary [for them] to convince the world that these heavy burdens were being laid upon us in the interests of public morality, not

as conquered foes but as the deliberate disturbers of the peace of the world... This book has been written, often in anguish of heart, in the belief that it is necessary. *The readers I desire, be they in Germany or elsewhere, are those who seek earnestly to see things as they really were.*"<sup>1</sup> At least some non-German historians have since admitted that Germany itself had mistakenly assumed that this local conflict would remain local, and therefore Germany was entirely unprepared for war when it started. Of course, it quickly mobilized for war. On July 31, 1914 Russia had declared general mobilization of its forces, and in effect declared war on Germany and Austria. On August 1 Germany declared war on Russia, requesting France and Britain to stay neutral. France refused, and Britain, on Germany's invasion of Belgium, declared war on Germany on August 4.

A remarkable, spontaneous event was to take place on the Western front at Christmas time 1914, proving the cruel manipulation of warmongers sitting in their Home Office while young men were sent to die. A group of German soldiers suddenly decided, on Christmas Eve to sing carols and carry the evergreen tree (a Christmas tradition in Germany but not well known elsewhere as yet) with open arms towards the Brit forces across Zero Ground. At first the Brits raised their guns to shoot but then wavered, dropped them and met the Germans to exchange greetings of goodwill. News of this Christmas Day "armistice" between these soldiers and their officers, was reported to London, a stern command was sent for the names of those who had broken the rules of war by this Christmas fraternizing. The next day, the forces on both sides saw how dangerous it was to have humane concerns for the enemy and quickly returned to the business of killing.

*Just two days before the start of the War, Germany had formalized an alliance with Turkey.* Germany had insisted the document have a clause that if Russia were to enter the war in the Austro-Serbian conflict, Turkey must enter the war on the side of the Triple Alliance; only then would Germany guarantee Turkey's territorial integrity against any invaders. Now, a frightened Turkey declared its neutrality, and secretly pleaded with Germany of its own unpreparedness. Germany however insisted on Turkey's entry into the war as soon as it could mobilize its forces.

Turkey's new government had recognized, as talk of war spread earlier, that it's navy desperately needed ships for the nation's defense. The public, despite being poor, responded to this appeal for contributions for these ships, and *subscribed* money for the building of two ships, *Sultan Osman* and *Reshadiye*. Even "officials had submitted for this patriotic purpose to cuts in their salaries and the final installments had lately been paid"<sup>2</sup> and the ships had been built and were ready for delivery.

There was only one problem. *Turkey had foolishly placed this order with English shipyards*, believing that despite its refusal so far, Britain would finally sign an alliance with Turkey. But Britain refused Turkey's repeated pleas for an alliance and now the British government refused to allow delivery of those two vessels bought by Turkey. "The Porte accused Britain of a breach of international law, the [Turkish] public accused her of plain theft, and a pro-German newspaper invoked upon her 'A Thousand Curses.'" But while admitting to these facts, Kinross, as a



dutiful Briton (usually fair on issues of *earlier* times but not on issues *close to his own times*), says "Britain, now herself at war, could claim every right to commandeer the ships."<sup>3</sup>

Germany sent two German ships the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* out of commiseration, it said, for Turkish desperate need, as it was obvious that Russia and its Slavic allies would seek to invade the Dardanelles now. *But a British naval force pursued the two German ships, to stop destroy them before they reached Turkey.* They were only saved by taking refuge in the Straits. "[Enver Pasha] agreed to order the forts to open fire if the pursuing British warships tried to follow them."<sup>4</sup> The next day, it was announced that the two German ships (renamed *Yavuz* and *Medilli*) were Turkish ships now, and there was pride and joy in the crowds as a special regatta was held, with the Sultan brought out to review the two new ships, now part of Turkey's fleet.

But Britain was not done. Its First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill proposed that the British squadron should "shoot its way through the Straits and sink the two 'German' ships in the Marmara. But he was overruled by his colleagues."<sup>5</sup> Turkey had still proclaimed itself *neutral* and what Churchill proposed was a blatant act of sea piracy. When Churchill's superiors rejected this plan, "He now put forward a plan for the seizure of the Gallipoli peninsula, ...and urged [Foreign Secretary] Grey to obtain support from the Russians. But they had no such troops to spare. [Greece's] King Constantine (whose wife was a sister of the Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany) now declared [on being approached by Britain] that the Greeks would attack only if the Turks attacked first, and Churchill was convinced by advisors that a naval attack, without land force, must fail. So for the present the project lapsed."<sup>6</sup>

Most of Turkey's Cabinet was for neutrality and against any active alliance with Germany. As there were no fresh threats from Britain, Turkey hoped it could remain neutral after all. But Britain was delaying its action against Turkey for a reason. "Lord Kitchener [Britain's minister of war] insisted that she [Turkey] be kept neutral or at least at peace with Britain, *until the Indian imperial troops could be brought safely through the Suez Canal.*" Britain also sought to provoke a Turkish rash act to take action. Turkey did not, so Britain waited for its Indian forces to arrive to go after the Turks.<sup>7</sup>

The Indian troops reached the Mediterranean safely. So on September 27, "a British squadron at the mouth of the Dardanelles ordered a Turkish torpedo boat to turn back. This unjustified action" [by the British] admits Kinross, caused Germany to ask Turkey to close the Straits against foreign shipping. Enver Pasha agreed. What British (and, naturally, American) historians claim then transpired is hard to believe. According to Western sources, Turkey, even while it pleaded to be allowed to stay neutral, suddenly decided on a suicidal course of attacking Russian ships, then bombarded the Russian ports (recently Turkish ports) of Odessa and Sebastopol. As we have noted earlier, Britain had launched a massive attack during the Greek revolution, claiming that the Turks had made a rash, suicidal attack first with a *solitary* vessel upon a British naval force, which was why the British

attacked. Now, according to Britain, France, and Russia — and subsequent Western historians — without any provocation Turkey attacked Russian ships and bombarded the Russian ports! The Turkish version of what actually happened is of course entirely the reverse.

Now Britain, France and Russia immediately condemned this "wanton" Turkish attack and declared war on Turkey on November 5, 1914. Why Turkey so weak militarily that even the relatively small Balkan powers had been able to defeat her, would now jump into the World War unprovoked, was not explained by Western powers or their media. So, "*deserted, as it now seemed clear, by their former Western allies, the Turkish people were ready to turn with resignation, if not with universal enthusiasm, to the new alliance with Germany.*"<sup>8</sup>

Soon Russia inflicted huge losses on the Turks in the Caucasus, and Egyptian and Indian forces inflicted similar defeats on the Turkish nation from the Sinai deserts to the Suez Canal. These victories led Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, to hope for a dramatic final victory by Britain's own forces. He insisted that his theatrical plan of invading Istanbul through the Gallipoli peninsula should now be put into operation. "Churchill planned this as a wholly naval operation with a land force held in reserve."<sup>9</sup> If Britain entered Istanbul and conquered it, it could also claim most of the Empire when the spoils were divided with its Allies.

The plan, however, was a disaster for the British. They suffered heavy losses. "By the end of 1915, this [invasion] had failed in two costly offensives, leading to a British withdrawal and providing the Turks with a decisive and unforeseen victory."<sup>10</sup>

## (2)

The Russian revolution of 1917 came as a thunderous shock to the Allies, particularly Britain, whose Machiavellian strategists rushed into emergency sessions at this colossal disaster. The Tsarist regime was overthrown by a revolution of *all* segments of the population, including some of the old aristocracy. The new Kerensky government they formed was, however, soon overthrown by the Bolsheviks who formed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Winston Churchill, as Minister of War, sent British forces (with forces from other Allies) to war against the revolutionaries and to place the Tsar back on the Russian throne. The attempt failed. In fact it *strengthened* the hand of Vladimir Lenin, who pointed to the utter corruption of the European system and to the American "democracy" as another tool of the ruling classes of Europe, as it had participated in the invasion to set the Tsar back on the throne, despite the unending brutality he and previous Tsars had inflicted upon the people. *And he pointed to the Christian Church, as an extremely wealthy institution with close ties to the Western rulers that had helped the Tsars by inflicting a hypnotic impact of complacency upon the people through the ages, Russians themselves knew of the moral degradation in the Russian Court of their own times with the sexual exploits of the Court priest Rasputin, which were open*

and brazen. The telling arguments all worked to win the majority of the people to the new Communist system as the solution.

Suddenly, to the utter dismay of Britain and France, the powerful Russian force, their major ally in the War and past colonial escapades, now suddenly withdrew from that War. The new revolutionary government in Russia said it had no desire to continue a War which was taking the lives of millions of innocent people to satisfy the ambitions of cousin monarchs and their corrupt governments.

### (3)

The US entry into the war in 1917 saved the Allies. Its entry had been sought from the very start by Britain. Even before Britain declared war on Germany, the British government found that its Treasury was desperately short of the enormous funds needed to prepare for what was advertised as "the war to end all wars." It begged the US for more money. The US provided some monetary help, food and medical supplies and, as was revealed later, lots of arms. But it was not willing to provide unlimited financial aid to Britain without equal amounts in gold security from its South African holdings. President Wilson, personally against war as a solution, refused to enter it. The majority of Americans agreed with him.

Britain however well knew of the Anglophilia in the US especially among the tycoons seeking acceptance at any cost. It now tapped the tycoons for money. In his book *An Ocean Apart* BBC veteran David Dimbleby concedes that the British always thirsted for American money even before WWI commenced. Now, when approached by the British, American steel magnet J.P. Morgan, a fierce Anglophile, provided funds and pressured other rich tycoons and Wall Street types to provide the hundreds of millions that Britain needed. However, the hard-nosed American tycoons, while just as keen to gain social acceptance of the British aristocracy, wished to have their backs scratched too. Those with children seeking matrimonial ties with titled British families, sought that. But others wanted entry into the British markets. Jonathan Dimbleby reported in a 1980s BBC program that American corporations were set up in Britain with dummy (usually titled) Britons as Chairmen of the boards of directors.

The American masses were very poor, over 1.5 million New Yorkers (75% of the city's population) lived in gruesome tenements with entire families in single-rooms; child labor and prostitution were rampant; yet the immigrants came in droves; the Statue of Liberty, a gift from France, had these beautiful words of an American poetess inscribed on it: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free". Courageous writers like Upton Sinclair and visiting writers like Charles Dickens, H.G. Wells, Rudyard Kipling were fiercely critical of the conditions in which most Americans lived and worked.

Something tragic had happened to the American Experiment. After Lincoln was killed, there was a string of Republican Presidents (interspersed with one Democrat who felt he must toe the same line as well) who were of a very different character than "Honest Abe" the first Republican President. After Lincoln,

the Republicans (except one Democrat Cleveland) held the White House of over 50 years and passionately embraced Victorian Capitalism and Colonialism. Their primary supporters were the newly rich, the robber barons, the new industrialists, the Wall Street manipulators, the corporate criminals. In 1871, as we have seen, Walt Whitman (in *Democratic Vistas*) wrote "It is as if we were being endowed with a vast and thoroughly appointed body and then left with little or no soul".

While the huge sums provided by American tycoons to the British, in addition to the war supplies, food and medicine sent by the US government, helped Britain a great deal, Britain had not given up on inducing the US into the war. The problem was the American public was adamantly opposed to entering it. Even the American Republican Party leaders, though deeply enamored of aristocratic Britain and usually willing to do what it wished, knew how strongly the public was anti-war. While the overall American economy was somewhat stagnant now, the tycoons were continuing to rake in millions; oil, gold, silver, copper were flowing, in railways and autos, in stock markets manipulation and "futures" speculations; the US had been extended "from sea to shining sea"; corruption was rampant. Congressmen conducted auctions in bribes between tycoons for their vote. "Standard Oil did everything to the Pennsylvania legislature except refine it... In Henry Adam's word 'The moral law has expired' " wrote Thayer (*Who Shakes the Money Tree?*).<sup>11</sup> The Wild West was creating its own millionaires with gambling, prostitution, gold and oil prospecting (at least for those who could survive in a lawless milieu where the Gun settled all differences). J.P. Morgan and Andrew Carnegie had locked horns and Morgan had come away with U.S. Steel, which was close to overtaking the US Treasury in its annual turnover (which it did in 1916). By this time, social climber Morgan had applied *himself* with the same zeal to becoming "refined" as he had to making money, acquiring art, creating museums, and sending as much time as he could among the grateful aristocracy of England. William Randolph Hearst, the newspaper tycoon, had gone one better than other multi-millionaires who transported English castles and French chateaux to the US. If these English and French stately homes were so impressive to the public, reasoned Hearst, why not get *both* and *combine* them with one's own fancy and flavor? Hearst had an English castle and a French chateau transported, brick by brick, to the Big Sur, California. For good measure, he added his own ideas to the mix and a zoo. As we have seen, multi-millionaire "Commodore" Vanderbilt (a title he affixed to his name) not only had "formal balls" in his new "castle" but employed actors, attired in the British regency costumes, to act like footmen, butlers, and maids.

There were exciting positive developments as well but with them, uncontrolled greed. New marketing ideas were developing which needed to be examined and monitored to control possible ill effects on society from overzealous pursuit of profits. There was, for instance, the new assembly-line manufacturing at the Ford Motor Company. While this led to great monotony for the laborers, it speeded up, reduced production time, increased profits greatly, so it was used as aggressively as possible. But exciting new ideas also emerged. Ward and Sears (a railway clerk) had commenced a small mail-order business. F.W. Woolworth had started the



precursor of the department store, the five-and-ten cent store. Impulse purchase became a serious concept (with subsequent attractive packaging) with the first Piggly-Wiggly food store in 1916. In 1901, Italian Guglielmo Marconi had discovered wireless communication and radio was becoming a powerful new medium of communication in the US.

And there were the movies. In 1895, the Lumiere Brothers in France had first produced the moving picture. A French woman then came up with the first entertainment film. The public loved it. American clothing merchants in New York now became involved in large-scale commercial production of movies. With Wall Street backing, they moved from the East Coast to Hollywood, created inside the township of Los Angeles in California. The Fox Motion Picture Box Office Company formed in 1911, was set up with a basic form of consumer research to determine what people might wish to see. The motion picture was a new art form, but the "box office" cash receipts were at the core of the new motion picture industry from the very start.

Corporate newspapers, movies and radio were aimed to keep the masses from being too concerned about their own pathetic poverty and focus instead on the riches around them, to bask in the borrowed glory of the very rich. And the public did. But rich and poor, most Americans did not want to be involved in Europe's War of 1914.

But then, suddenly, the US was drawn into the War. The British Cunard Line luxury passenger ship *Lusitania* left New York May 1, 1915 for Liverpool, and was torpedoed off the coast of Ireland. Only about half of the passengers and crew survived. The ship was new, built to be impregnable, yet it sank within fifteen minutes. Immediately Germany was charged with attacking a passenger ship with its U-boats. Fierce passions were aroused in the US as Germany refused to apologize, claiming that America had been warned repeatedly not to transport ammunition in passenger ships. The US vehemently denied there was any ammunition on board. In the meanwhile, the British told the US that they had intercepted what came to be called the Zimmermann cable sent by Germany to Mexico, and had decoded it. The message asked for Mexico to become an ally of Germany, in return for which Germany would help Mexico regain all the territories it had lost to the US. There was unbounded fury in the US now, and it declared war on Germany.

In the anti-war era of the 1970s, with new technology, American experts investigated, found that the *Lusitania* was carrying a vast load of ammunition. There had been two explosions, the survivors had said. The first explosion, it was found, was from a torpedo, but this had been much less violent than the second explosion. In the past twenty years, experts who examined the remains of the ship said the ship was carrying huge arsenals of weapons, including high explosives, which is why the ship exploded and sank so quickly. Ironically, British writers like David Dimbleby and David Reynolds admit that the ship was carrying munitions, whereas US authorities to this day continue to fudge. "Morgan's [corporation], it later emerged, had shipped consignment of 1,248 cases of shells, six million rounds of ammunition and eighteen cases of percussion fuses for the British Army, and the

second and fatal explosion [on the *Lusitania*] had almost certainly been caused by the detonation of this secret cargo," write Dimbleby and Reynolds.<sup>12</sup>

But even more shocking news was to surface in the 1980s, after some secret documents of Winston Churchill (sealed under the Official Secrets Act) were finally made public. Passenger ships had carried American ammunition to Britain from the start of the war. German U-boats had learnt this and attacked them. Britain's First Lord of the Admiralty Churchill instructed all his merchant ships (which were armed) to return fire if attacked. It was in this climate that about three months before the *Lusitania* was sunk, Churchill wrote a secret memorandum (only made public in the late 1980s) dated Feb 12, 1915, to his lieutenants in which he issued the following order: "It is most important to attract neutral shipping to our shores, in the hope especially of embroiling the US with Germany...For our part [US] traffic — the more the better, and if some of it gets into trouble, better still...the more they come, the greater our safety and the German embarrassment. Please act promptly so that the announcement may synchronise with our impending policy."

The truth was out some seventy years too late. Germany had always known that the US constantly shipped ammunition to Britain in passenger ships as well but the American public did not. In 1915 the German Embassy in the US even placed advertisements in American newspapers, warning of dangers to passengers traveling in such ships because Germany had to attack them. On this occasion, before the *Lusitania* sailed from New York, the German Embassy placed an advertisement next to the sailing details of the *Lusitania*, warning that passenger ships entering the war zone were in danger of being attacked. The *Lusitania* survivors said (in a 1980s documentary in the US, when that 1915 advertisement was shown to them) that they had unfortunately not seen it at the time, and Cunard had not warned them of any danger.

#### (4)

Most objective Western historians agree that Turkey's eventual defeat was sealed not by foreign enemies but by those within the state. Since 1831, when France had set up its "Foreign Legion" consisting of mercenaries and criminals (no questions were asked about the past of those who joined from any nation) to operate in Algeria and other parts of Africa, Britain had also set up foreign service, but consisting of Britons who were trained to act as secret agents and informers. Through them and through London, Britain had worked patiently to win over some of the Arab tribal leaders, promising them their own independent states after the war. Armenians of course were most willing to sabotage from within, leading to even more reprisals against them by the new Turkish government. But now even the Muslim Arabs leaders were willing to fight for the overthrow of the Turks and win the independence they wanted so much and which Britain now promised again and again.

Without this internal enemy, the Turkish State might have survived at least to fight a lot longer. It may never be known whether T.E. Lawrence ("Lawrence of Arabia") who came as a British spy, had truly changed sides or merely feigned friendship for the Arabs. When he returned to England many years later, he admitted that as a British secret agent, he had started by pretending friendship with the Arabs, as other British agents did, but claimed that he had developed genuine love for the Arabs (Britain claimed it was merely homosexual love for an Arab boy) and he was bitterly critical of the British government's double-cross of the Arabs in which he had played an inadvertent role. He drank heavily (from guilt, it was said) and died in an accident riding his motorcycle (some writers claim he was silenced by British agents).

Reputable Western historians admit that even though Britain's Egyptian and Indian forces played an important role, final victory required the cooperation of prominent Arab leaders within the Ottoman Empire. Arabs had of course never been happy at being ruled by the Turks. But now a major movement had started. "An enemy within the Ottoman ranks had risen in the shape of the Arabs, who proclaimed a revolt in the Hedges [Hejaz], in the name of Arab independence against Ottoman rule"; Kinross refers to Ibn Saud as this "enemy." It was true of course that the British immediately saw the great benefit to themselves in this Hejaz insurrection. Abdullah Ibn Saud, the tribal leader of a small desert portion of the Hejaz had become powerful through his remarkable military skills. In 1744 Ibn Saud's ancestor had embraced the teachings of Muhammad al-Wahhab who condemned many of the existing practices among Muslims. "The two men then formed a coalition...the Wahhabis threatened the province of Syria and Iraq: in 1803 they attacked the shrine of Imam Hussein at Karbala on the grounds that this cult was superstitious idolatry."<sup>13</sup>

"Wahhabism emphasized the brotherhood and equality that should prevail among all Muslims, irrespective of tribe or rank" says Armstrong<sup>14</sup>. In fact it is the *Qur'an* that lays this strict rule. In some other ways, Wahhabism did have a more sophisticated interpretation of Islam, with its belief in reverence exclusively for God, not for men. And yet, the Wahhabis' adherence to Islam's directives regarding the *universality* of Islam was puzzling; they were evidently just as fierce in upholding Arab *ethnic* dress and practices, even Arab rights above other ethnicities in religion. As Armstrong states, "They [Wahhabis] also insisted that Arabs, not the Turks, should control the Muslim *ummah* and Ibn Saud called a *jihād* against those Arab sharifs [local rulers] who ruled the Hedges [Hejaz] in the name of the Ottoman Turks." Perhaps the recent glorification of Turkish ethnicity by the Committee would have made the Saudis deeply concerned. Periodically, Ibn Saud's troops had managed to attack and "wrest a large portion of Central Arabia."<sup>15</sup> At one point they had conquered Mecca and Medina but then the Ottoman sultan had retaken it with Egyptian forces. (In 1932, 14 years after the Ottoman State ceased to be, Ibn Saud's forces conquered all the land which now comprise Saudi Arabia, including Mecca and Medina).

The British had decided that tribal leaders like Ibn Saud as the perfect allies in the 20th century against the Ottomans *within* that empire. Some Western historians (e.g., Peter Mansfield in *History of the Middle East*) state that Ibn Saud was already receiving monthly stipends from the British before the World War started. No oil had, as yet, been discovered. Whether the British paid such monthly stipends to other Arab leaders as well is not known.

British secret agents like T.E. Lawrence had been spread all around the Middle East, establishing rapport with the tribes as true friends without of course revealing that they worked as agents for the British government. One British agent (Riley) was a notorious hedonist ("living the life of Riley" became a known expression and no doubt the inspiration for "James Bond" to a later agent/author Ian Fleming). But the British knew that they also needed a really prominent Arab leader as an ally. They saw Sharif Hussein, reportedly a descendent of an ancient Arab lineage with vast influence in the Arab world, as such a leader.

### (5)

Turkish forces did have some initial successes during WWI, but then Christian Armenians "disrupted communications and formed volunteer groups to help the Russians."<sup>16</sup> But much of the attacks on Turkey from outside its borders were conducted by Britain's colonial armies. To start with, Indian and Australian troops were sent on the Gallipoli peninsula, to threaten Istanbul itself. But this did not succeed. A large Egyptian force had been sent by the British to defend the Suez Canal. "The pro-Turkish and pan-Islamic feelings which Britain had feared were almost non-existent. The oriental secretary in Cairo, Sir Ronald Storrs, wrote 'Pious Muslims shake their heads and say 'We wish the Turks all success—from afar.'"<sup>16</sup>

According to Mansfield, even before he became Secretary of War, Lord Kitchener had approached Sharif Hussein in Mecca "six weeks before Turkey entered the war to ask which way the Arabs would turn if Turkey allied itself to Germany" (ibid). The question this begs is this: *How did the British know six weeks earlier that Turkey would ally itself with Germany, if Turkey signed a treaty with Germany just two days before the War after it had made six desperate attempts to get a treaty with Britain and France?* Clearly Britain felt this coming War was the time to swallow Turkey, before it made any more reforms, which would make it more difficult to do so.

Hussein was undecided when Kitchener broached the subject. After all, the Sultan had been most friendly to him in recent times. After becoming Secretary of War, Kitchener again approached Sharif Hussein; he "promised Hussein that, if he would come out against Turkey, Britain would guarantee his retention of the title of Grand Sharif and defend him against external aggression... he would have British support, and it included a general promise to help Arabs obtain their freedom," writes Mansfield<sup>17</sup>. Hussein was interested.

After E.H.I. Shakespeare, sent to meet Ibn Saud, was killed in January 1915, the British decided it might be safer to withhold their decision on their choice of



"prime" ally among the Arabs. The British approached Arabs in Mesopotamia, in the Persian Gulf and the Arab peninsula. "Sharif Hussein might be a willing ally, but he was also powerful and as the keeper of the Kaaba, and [with] his political astuteness, *he may become too powerful*. Britain did not mind small Arab fiefdoms; it did not want another large Muslim nation, which Sharif Hussein might easily create from among the Arabs. Already Sharif Hussein had demanded that all Arab provinces must be given independence, from Mersin in the north, the Persian frontier in the east, the Mediterranean in the west, and the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean in the south."<sup>18</sup>

When Kitchener "approached Sharif Hussein in Mecca to find out which way the Arabs would turn if Turkey allied itself with Germany...he [Sharif] hinted that he might bring the Hejazis out in revolt against the Turks if he was ensured of enough British support...A further message from Kitchener [now War Minister in the British cabinet] promised Hussein that ... he would have British support, and it included a general promise to help the Arabs obtain their freedom...in 1917 they [Britain and France] would both recognize him [Hussein] as king of the Hedges[Hejaz]."<sup>19</sup> After Britain had rejected Turkey's six separate pleas for a defense treaty with the Allies, it knew Turkey had only Germany to fall back upon.

After the War started, Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Egypt was delegated to stay in contact with Hussein. He confirmed to Sharif Hussein in a letter dated Oct. 24, 1915, that "Subject to the modifications stated above [i.e., Syrian coast for which French approval was needed], Great Britain is prepared to recognize and uphold the independence of the Arabs in all the regions lying within the frontiers proposed by the Sharif of Mecca."<sup>20</sup>

Britain knew that the Sharif was vulnerable if he could not command unity from his fellow Arabs; the Arab tribal leaders on the fringes of the peninsula and Ibn Saud as well as the Arabs in Mesopotamia wanted their own little kingdoms. Turkey's Jemal Pasha had also tried to appeal to Arab "brothers" in their hour of need. But he soon found that anti-Turkish activities among the Arabs extended to spying against the Turkish state, so he foolishly turned to repression. He put prominent Arabs on trial for treason. Several were publicly executed in 1915 and 1916. In Syria however, the Syrian Muslim majority were even more strongly against French domination while its Maronite Christians were for the French. When therefore Sharif Hussein took Mecca from its Turkish guards and raised the Arab flag on June 16, 1916, the French objected. And when Sharif Hussein was proclaimed "King of the Arab Countries" on November 2, 1916, Britain and France, confident that some Arab tribal heads [Mansfield does not specify which ones] would also object, *refused* to accept this. Wishing to keep Hussein in control during the War, however, they compromised and agreed in January 1917, to recognize him as the 'King of the Hedges' [Hejaz], including Mecca and Medina."

In a secret agreement between Sir Mark Sykes of Britain and Georges Picot of France, says Mansfield, Britain and France had in fact decided that after the War, *Tsarist Russia could have Istanbul and the Dardanelles while the rest of the Ottoman Empire would be divided under their "sphere of influence."* In this secret

agreement, Palestine, including Jerusalem, would eventually be under "international control." Aden would remain under the British, and only two Arab chieftains, *Ibn Saud and the Yemen chieftain would get independent little kingdoms*. Just why these two were to have special treatment under this devious plan has never been revealed.

In the meanwhile, with all their leaders, from Sharif Hussein down, believing British promises that they would get an independent state, the Arabs were playing a critical role in the eventual defeat of the Ottomans. For instance, a large Arab force under Amir Feisal, the Sharif's son, was successful in keeping Turkish and German forces from closing the Red Sea to Allied ships, which might have been disastrous. Arabs infiltrated Turkish ranks even within Istanbul and subverted Ottoman plans and installations. In the meanwhile Amir Feisal's troops had won more victories over the Turks, even capturing the important port of Aqaba.

Then in Oct. 1917 came the Russian revolution. In rejecting the Tsarist Russian policy of colonialism, the new Russian government announced it would withdraw from World War I. The British and the French were dumbfounded. But there was more bad news for them to come. In rejecting the Tsarist policies, the new Russian government declared they also rejected all international diplomatic exploitation. The new Russian republic decided that countries like Turkey should know what was happening in secret between the Allies. Mansfield reported *the USSR informed Turkey of the Sykes-Picot agreement of which the Tsarist government had been given a copy and which the new Russian government now inherited*. Jemal Pasha immediately passed this information on to Sharif Hussein, "as proof of treachery against the Muslim peoples of the Ottoman Empire by the Christian powers" writes Mansfield.

More shocking revelations were to come. On November 2, 1917, Jemal Pasha received information from the USSR of another secret British-French agreement, this one attempting to win Jewish favor. He gave to Sharif Hussein a letter from British foreign secretary Arthur Balfour to the Jewish multi-millionaire Baron Rothschild (who did not want to be in any Jewish homeland himself, but *wanted Jewish masses sent there*), in which Balfour said the British government "view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people...[however] it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine."<sup>21</sup> Already, there was a steady inflow of Jews from around the world into Palestine. A few thousand before, there were, in 1914, 80,000 Jews (local and foreign) in Palestine, versus 650,000 Arabs.

The naïve Arabs were stunned to find proof of Britain's duplicity. They also realized it was *too late to change sides* (some sources say British agents had assured them the documents the Russians had provided were forgeries). They had already committed their forces to the defeat of the Ottomans, and the Britain's own forces, mainly colonized Indian Muslims, were now advancing upon Jerusalem, which they took on December 9, 1917; Amir Feisal's forces took Damascus on October 1, 1917. In other warfronts, French had suffered enormous casualties in

the War, as had Britain's colonial troops. However, Aleppo fell to the Allies on Oct. 26. On October 30, the Ottoman government signed an armistice agreement at Mudros.

Commander D.G. Hogarth was sent to see Sharif Hussein, now "King of Hejaz." Hogarth later reported to the British Government that "The King would not accept an independent Jewish State in Palestine, nor was I instructed to warn him that such a state was contemplated... [Therefore] Hussein accepted the assurances and ended by showing enthusiasm for the advantages that Jewish immigration would bring to the Arab countries."<sup>22</sup> Arab sources deny that Sharif Hussein was "enthusiastic" but was willing to accept a few more Jews in Palestine from compassion.

(6)

Quickly the British forgot its promises to the Arabs and implemented the terms of the Balfour Declaration. "Soon after Jerusalem's capture from the Turks, Weizmann arrived at the head of a Zionist Commission and established its headquarters there."<sup>23</sup>

Balfour now expressed what had evidently ruled the Western powers secretly all along: "The four great powers are committed to Zionism and Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-old tradition, in present needs and future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land."<sup>24</sup>

When Syria was conquered from the Turks by Arab armies, there was great public rejoicing, despite the horrors of war and a plague of locusts that hit the state. "Between 300 and 500,000 people died out of a population of 4 million. Although it was Allenby's policy however possible to allow Amir Feisal's troops to enter the captured cities in triumph and to take over the administration, the *entente* with France was clearly Britain's first consideration, and when France objected to the display of Feisal's flag in Beirut, Allenby ordered its removal. The French hastened to land troops in Beirut at the end of the war, and the whole coastal area from Tyre to Cilicia in Asia Minor came under French military administration. The British Occupied Enemy Territory Administration South (OETA South) covered Palestine."<sup>25</sup>

Britain and France had defeated Woodrow Wilson's idealism at Versailles, and Republicans in the US had applied the finishing touch. Wilson insisted that victors should not seek rewards from war (Wilson was of course more concerned with Germany than Turkey). They had argued angrily with him to no avail. For centuries it had been a tradition in Europe, to seize rewards from wars; it was how colonial empires had come to be. Not only did Baldwin of Britain and Clemenceau of France demand rewards, even if it came in the form of a pound of flesh from Germany, they wanted it. Britain's masses, like those across Europe, respected Wilson a lot, but not Britain's rulers. Historically, Britain's most powerful weapon with the US was the "cousinly link", of "Anglo-Saxon" ethnicity, which appealed to most Americans even many who were not Anglo-Saxon. Wilson had blunted that powerful British weapon.

Wilson, like Thomas Jefferson, was himself of English antecedents, an intellectual of moral integrity who strongly *opposed* this ethnocentric attitude, and saw the true intent behind it. In fact he told the King of England (as quoted in *An Ocean Apart*, also by Lloyd Gardener in *Safe for Democracy*) the following: "You must not speak of us [Americans] ... as cousins, still less as brothers; we are neither. Neither must you think of us as Anglo-Saxons, for that term can no longer be rightly applied to the people of the United States. Nor must too much importance in this connection be attached to the fact that English is our common language... No, there are only two things which can establish and maintain close relations between your country and mine: they are community of ideals and of interests."<sup>26</sup> This remarkably American was the last President to express, unreservedly, this re-affirmation of Jeffersonian principles. After him, the thirst to be accepted by the British, for all the wrong reasons, ruled most Democratic and all Republican Presidents.

As we have seen, Wilson was soon forced to hurriedly return to the US as his Republican opponents had convinced the public that the US should stay out of world affairs. But before he left Europe, Britain and France could not afford to antagonize him, the President of the very rich US, so they sought to dupe him. "When seven prominent Egyptians protested to Wilson about the British-French plans, known as the Declaration to the Seven, Britain reply — given wide publicity — was that the future government of Arab territories liberated by the action of Arab armies would be based on the principal of the 'consent of the governed' [*this was a phrase out of Wilson's Four Ends of Peace, later included in the Covenant of the League of Nations*]... It was later given even greater force by an Anglo-French declaration of 7 November 1918 — that is, in the week between the signing of the armistice agreements with Turkey and Germany — which said that the goal of the British and French governments was the complete and final liberation of peoples oppressed by the Turks and the setting up of national governments and administrations which should derive their authority from the free exercise of the initiative and choice of the indigenous population ... Even 'the consent of the governed' was an empty phrase."<sup>27</sup>

"When the [Turkish] Empire finally collapsed in 1918, the Arabs came under Western non-Muslim rule. This was not a sudden coup: a new kind of Western invasion had begun as early as the sixteenth century when the Ottomans gave Britain, France and Holland special concessions that allowed them the same rights in the Middle East as the native Christian *dhimmi*s (or *millets* as the Turks called the protected minorities). The Europeans instantly established a network of trading posts and consular missions which proved to be the Trojan horse that brought Western cultural and social influence into the area."<sup>28</sup> writes Armstrong. And Lieut-General Sir John Bagot Glubb, who was to spend 26 years now in Transjordan, and quite obviously worked simultaneously for British interests there, is also very specific about the British commitment to the Arabs, and admits that the British did not live up to their promise: "In 1915, the Sherif Hussein of Mecca rose in revolt against the Turks. His son Feisal, accompanied by a British Mission, which included T.E. Lawrence, fought side-by-side with Allenby's army in Trans-Jordan. In return



for these services, the Arabs were promised an independent government at the end of the war. *The future boundaries of this Arab State were described as the 37th parallel of latitude on the north, the frontier of Persia and the Persian Gulf on the east, on the south the Indian Ocean (excluding Aden), and on the west the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. Portions of Syria lying to the west of Damascus, Homs, Hamah and Aleppo were excluded.*<sup>72</sup> However, this duplicity (Glubb, a Briton, hastens to add) was not because the British wished to cheat, but because the US strongly demanded Jewish settlements in Palestine! Whatever the truth, with British and French forces in command, the Arabs could now do little.

Sharif Hussein, the most powerful Arab of the time, with a large following, was cajoled. He was, after all, "king" of the Hejaz now! But when he died and his son Ali succeeded him in 1925, Ibn Saud dethroned him and took over as "king." Presumably as consolation, Sharif Hussein's other son, Abdullah was made "King" Abdullah of Jordan. He too was very close to the British (in fact the Jordanian army was handed to Lieut.-Gen Glubb to command). Another son of Sharif Hussein was made "King" Feisal of Iraq. The ancient boundaries of Iraq (Mesopotamia) were changed so that the bottom half (at the 19th parallel) was cut into a new sheikdom called Kuwait and al-Sabah, the local tribal leader was made the hereditary ruler, aligned to the British.

Most of Syrian territory promised to Sharif Hussein was never given of course. Instead they were placed under direct French control. Another country was carved out of Syria called Lebanon, all of which would be controlled by France. Palestine, under British mandate, was to be ruled directly by Britain, for the present.

## (7)

Persia, whose national movement had been so troublesome to Britain and Russia, had to be carefully and fully manacled. Like the new Arab chieftains, Ali Reza Pahlavi, a former soldier, was now raised to instant royalty in Persia (renamed Iran) and set about immediately to "modernize" the country, inflicting severe punishments of subjects who tended to be Muslim orthodox. The *chador* (cloth headgear) became a symbol of this religious conservatism. Soon educated women opposed to Pahlavi donned the *chador* in defiance of the law. Shah Pahlavi's police had orders to wrench off the offensive *chador* and punish the offenders. Many women, some reports alleged, were raped in custody as part of the punishment for donning the *chador*. Shah Ali Reza Pahlavi was very keen to remove the "eastern cloak" of Islam and enhance the image of the Persians as a pure Aryan race, with a glorious non-Muslim history of the past. With Western encouragement he was determined to crush the power of the leading religious clerics opposed to him, the *Ulema*, the Ayatollahs.

Already the potential for huge deposits of oil in these regions were known. Soon extensive explorations were underway. Oil was discovered in large quantities.

Saudi Arabia, Persia and later Kuwait would become the source of great wealth for the British petroleum companies and for their rulers, soon to be joined by the Americans in what became known as the oil consortium of the Seven Sisters.

## (8)

There remained odd fragments of the Turkish Empire, including Istanbul. After the War, "the leaders of the Young Turk triumvirate fled into exile, where all three were to meet violent deaths. The allies, soon in occupation of Istanbul, drafted plans at the Paris Peace Conference not only for the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, but for the partitioning of its Anatolian homeland between France, Italy and Greece, with a Turkish state reduced to a rump of a few inland provinces."<sup>73</sup> Sultan Mehmet V collapsed and died at the end of the War. The Sultan, though a figurehead, was still monarch, however, so the Allies ordered new Sultan Mehmet VI to sign the terms of surrender in the Armistice Agreement.

The USSR had generously decided to return the territories recently conquered by Tsarist Russia from the Turks during the War. "Under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (9 March 1918, after the Bolshevik Revolution) Turkey had regained all the territories lost to Russia during the war, as well as those ceded in 1877."<sup>74</sup> *The territories captured by Tsarist Russia over the past century including the ancient states of Chechnya and Dagestan were not returned or made independent. They were made part of USSR, possibly because they were thought to be rich in mineral deposits.* By this time Britain, France and Italy had occupied most of the Western part of the old Ottoman Empire.

"In applying for an armistice the Turks had notified President Wilson that they were ready for peace on the basis of his Fourteen Points." But Britain had other ideas. Britain's Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon wanted that the Turks, "of unmitigated evil to everybody" to be expunged from Europe. His Prime Minister Lloyd George "saw Turkey not as a living organism with a past and a present and a future, but simply as a space on the map from which other powers might be compensated and other concessions obtained in return."<sup>75</sup> In four secret agreements "contracted during the wars through bribes or rewards to her Allies, the British government had carved Turkey in Asia as well as in Europe. Constantinople had been promised to Tsarist Russia, in return for a British sphere of influence in Persia," an agreement now dead as Soviet Russia was no longer interested in this theft. The "second—the Sykes Picot agreement" chopped up the Arab world between Britain and France. "The third and fourth allowed the Italians a still larger portion of Asia Minor." Greece was promised all of "Hellenic Greece". After the War, when Venizelos returned as Greek Prime Minister (after King Constantine was ousted by the Allies), he demanded, for Greece, the entire Aegean coast and hinterland of what remained of war-ravaged Turkey. To Lloyd George, this was "fair and reasonable."<sup>76</sup> President Wilson objected to this as convoluted claim of "self-determination" but Britain was adamant and Wilson had little power now, with his problems at home growing by the day. Until recently, most Greeks had

always expressed their own preference for Muslim rule over that of Christians, and the few who had sought independence were known to be outlaws.

Mehmet VI was willing to do all of the Allies' bidding, but Mustafa Kemal, the soldier who had proved remarkably successful in the recent War, decided to resist the conquerors. He became Inspector-General of the Ninth Army. Sultan Mehmet had meekly accepted the Allied demand for all the Ottoman forces to disband, but Kemal instead organized a resistance force when Greece, backed by the Allies, invaded, assuming that Turkey would instantly fall. "Allies... 'allowed' a large Greek force to land at Izmir and occupy the surrounding district. Greek ambitions extended to the whole of western Anatolia aiming to restore the old Christian Empire at Constantinople... [Sultan] Mohamed ordered the Turkish troops not to resist, [but] Kemal organized for the cause of Turkish independence. The people rallied. They rejected the harsh terms of the Treaty of Sevres of August 1920 which would have left Turkey helpless and deprived of some of its richest provinces."<sup>35</sup>

What history books call "The Greco-Turkish War" lasted two years, from 1920 to 1922. The weary Turkish forces lost ground at the start but then rallied in 1921. "In 1922... the Greeks were in headlong retreat, and in September 1922 Mustafa Kemal occupied Izmir. When his forces crossed the Dardanelles to drive the Greeks out of European Turkey too, a direct clash with Britain was only narrowly averted. The Allies gave way by the terms of the armistice, to which the Greeks also adhered; they recognized Turkish sovereignty over Istanbul, the Straits and eastern Thrace. The peace conference that followed culminated with the Treaty of Lausanne of 24 July 1923. This recognized full Turkish sovereignty in nearly all the territories which are now [i.e. today] those of the Turkish Republic."<sup>36</sup>

The Allies were willing to accept a new Turkish Republic because Mustafa Kemal had assured them that he would obliterate all vestiges of traditional Islam from the new Turkish Republic. Mustafa Kemal, born in Salonika, had a mother who was a very pious practicing Muslim, but he was passionately drawn to a Western lifestyle. Lord Kinross in *Mustafa Kemal, Father of Modern Turkey* (William Morrow, 1964) reports that from a young age, Kemal loved dancing and bars and had developed deep frustrations at the contempt the West showered upon the Turks because they were Muslims. He was, above all, a nationalist, and probably believed that removing or "modernizing" Islam on Western lines was the only way to make his country acceptable to the Christian West.<sup>37</sup> He commenced with his mild "reforms" but was then encouraged by the West *not* to stop. Even the Arabic alphabet was removed, and replaced by the Cyrillic script used by Russia and Eastern Europe. Turkey under Attaturk (now living with his cousin and girl friend Fikriye) became a totally secular European state.

There was also some resistance within Turkey "less publicized by Western writers but vitally important — the struggle with the dervish brotherhoods" says Anthony Lewis (*The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford 1981). Along with tradition Sunni Islam, Sufi Islam of various schools prevailed in Turkey, and Kemal found that, while "in general, the [Sufi] brotherhoods rallied to the support of nationalism", their commitment to their form of Islam was difficult for Kemal to

deal with. Taking power away from the mainstream *Ulema* as Kemal now did, left them [the mainstream Muslims] virtually helpless; but the Sufis were more difficult because they had *never* had any power in mainstream society "The [Sufi] dervishes were used to independence and [being in the] opposition."<sup>38</sup> Kemal criticized Islam, ridiculed the Sufi's belief in saints, even raised doubts about the existence of God. In a speech, August 1925 he said "To seek help from the dead is a disgrace to a civilized community...Gentlemen, you and the whole nation must know, and know well, that the Republic of Turkey cannot be the land of *sejhs*, dervishes, disciples and lay brothers. The straightest, truest Way (*tarikati*) is the way of civilization. To be a man it is enough to do what civilization wants" <sup>39</sup>(italics added). By "civilization" he meant, of course, what the West said it was.

"Within four years, in a series of swift and sweeping changes, Kemal repealed the Holy Law and disestablished Islam...[He planned] restriction and then prohibition on religious education, the adoption of European civil and penal codes, the nationalization of pious foundations, the reduction and eventual elimination of the power of the *Ulema*, the transformation of social and cultural symbols and practices, such as dress and headgear, the calendar and the alphabet. The coping-stone of the edifice of legal secularism was laid in April 1928 when *Islam was removed from the constitution*."<sup>40</sup> By November 1925, Kemal had banned and dissolved all brotherhoods, closed the Sufi convents and monasteries. "By a curious oversight, article 75 of the constitution, guaranteeing freedom of religion, doctrine, *tarikati*, or philosophic belief had remained in force, even while the *tarikats* were dissolved and suppressed. This inconsistency was remedied by an amendment of 5 February, 1937, rewording the article and committing the reference to *tarikati*."<sup>41</sup> This effectively made "freedom of religion" which the West's "secular" democracies claimed for themselves, *illegal in Turkey*. The West raised no objections at all.

"Islam had been made a department of State; the *Ulema* had become minor civil servants...By the laws of 1924 the *medresses* — the old theological seminaries — were closed." A new Faculty of Divinity was set up. Among the recommendations of the Committee set up in 1928, shoes could be worn inside mosques, prayers must be in Turkish and what Lewis calls the "character of worship" should be beautiful, inspiring and spiritual to the West as well. Kemal and his Faculty of Divinity sought to make Islam as much like Christianity as possible "The need is urgent for modern and sacred instrumental music"<sup>42</sup> his committee urged, says Lewis. It did not work. "It was not possible to turn the mosque into a Muslim church, with pews, organ and an imam-percenter."<sup>43</sup>

Kemal knew that some Turks would not give up Islam, but he wished to make it hard for them by removing its practice from the mainstream "By 1929, Arabic and Persian languages were abolished as mediums of instructions in schools. Those who worshipped had to do so in Turkish. The call to prayer, after 1932, was in Turkish...However the secularization of Turkey was never quite as complete as was sometimes believed."<sup>44</sup> Lewis applauds Ataturk's attempts, though: "Only occasionally does one find a serious attempt to face the problems of Islam in the modern world and the role of Islam in a modern state."<sup>45</sup>



The USSR respected Turkey's national rights, but clearly not its religion. It cooperated with the West in divorcing Azerbaijan from other Muslim states. Lewis reports that in 1925 the Soviets (who had inherited Azerbaijan from the Tsar who had conquered it from Persia, and *had not returned it either*) introduced the Latin script to Azerbaijan, to create a chasm from Persia. When Turkey in January 1929 took on the Latin script, Russia *changed the Azerbaijani alphabet from Latin to Cyrillic*. By 1933-4, Arabic and Persian words were being deliberately excluded from the Turkish language, and European words added "to fill the gap left by the departed."<sup>46</sup> But it was difficult to remove all Arabic and Persian words, and when this was realized, Lewis says they were kept but it was announced that *these words were really Turkish*. In 1949, the new Turkish constitution written in "pure" Turkish was announced.

Mustafa Kemal was naturally a hero to most Turks for having saved their homeland, and about 1934 he took (or was given) the title of "Ataturk" or Father of Turkey. Many Turks, after all the suffering they and their forbears had endured through the centuries *because they were Muslims*, were willing to have the albatross of Islam, removed from around their neck if the West hated it so much.

But there were exceptions. Naturally, the deeply religious were traumatized. But there were also some prominent intellectuals who, initially, agreed with the removal of Islam from the center stage of modern Turkey, and then, in time, saw things differently. The writer Karaosmanglu was one such intellectual. Lewis reports that "Yakup Kadri Karaosmanglu, the distinguished Turkish author, has described in striking terms the thoughts and feelings that moved him" at a religious service in April 1924. "*The [secular] ideals which he and his contemporaries had followed [in rejecting Islam] were false and harmful; here [in Islam] was the truth...only the simple, ignorant people had understood this and had preserved the true values which the intellectuals, with their aping of the West, had forgotten.*"<sup>47</sup> Yakup Kadri went on to say: "*Yesterday for the first time the common people, whom we have always despised as ignorant and idle, taught the intellectuals of this country some divine truths. One of these is that the heart is superior to the mind. Another is that, apart from sincerity and devotion and simple faith, there is no way to salvation.*" The text was printed in Ergin, Muallim Cevdet'in Hayati Eserleri ve Kutuphanesi (1937). Gradually others began to share this viewpoint. In 1949, "religious education was reintroduced to Turkish schools." By 1950, despite stern disapproval of the secular government, 9000 Turks went for Hajj.<sup>48</sup>

### (9)

Official reports tell us 10 million died and 20 million were wounded in the World War I. Other estimates put the casualties much higher. Death, disease and devastation prevailed in all Europe but in Germany, the horrors did not end with the War. Wilson had argued passionately that the world should become civilized and recognize the futility of war, therefore victors should not be allowed rewards for themselves or the excessive punishment of the vanquished. He called for the creation an

international body to settle future differences. The concept of the League of Nations was Wilson's idea.

But Wilson's position became weak due to his political opponents in the US. It is impossible to tell whether the Republican Party who campaigned to turn the American public away from world affairs, had acted on its own (discrediting Wilson was after all their objective) or under pressure from the British "aristocrats" with whom they sought so passionately to be aligned. Led by Henry Cabot Lodge, the Republican opposition campaigned hard against US involvement in the Treaty and in European affairs. And they triumphed. And so did British and French leaders. By the time Wilson returned from Europe from those angry conferences with the British and French leaders, the majority of Americans sided with Republican "isolationism."

Wilson said he was determined to explain the facts and make the public change its mind even if he died in the attempt. And, in effect, he did. Having undertaken a horrendous country-wide railway tour, speaking to crowds, at times begging, at times furious, to explain why the US should avoid isolationism because US founding principles were intended to embrace the entire world, he refused to rest. During one passionate speech, he suffered a stroke from which he never recovered. He received the Nobel Peace Prize, but died in 1918 bitterly disappointed, especially when he learned that his successor to the presidency was to be the utterly mediocre Republican, Warren Harding. "How can he lead if he doesn't know where *he* is going?" Wilson reportedly said from his deathbed.

Sharp tactics at image-making were used for Harding in his campaign by Albert Lasker, son of a street peddler, now head of advertising agency Lord & Thomas, (later Foote Cone & Belding). Lasker who once simply announced "There is no advertising man but me" was certainly remarkable, as he helped the thoroughly inept Harding pull off a surprise victory. Harding's proposed policies heavily favored the very rich, and the new Hollywood millionaires added glamour while Lasker and Big Business provided image-making experts. And women had the vote for the first time. Harding's good looks were paraded.

President Harding was soon knee-deep in corruption scandals; some of his Cabinet members were jailed but he was not. Radio had commenced under Wilson but was, at his insistence, non-commercial. It was under Harding that Lasker was able to make radio not only commercial but get his friend David Sarnoff of RCA, who bought NBC, to commence "soap-operas", so called because Lasker's other friends, soap-makers Proctor and Gamble, sponsored these series, then even produced them (some of which they still do). What might be called the pulping of American minds (and then, of the masses the world over), had begun. When Harding died, his Vice-President Calvin Coolidge became President. He is remembered primarily for three things. He reportedly slept twelve hours a day, hardly ever spoke, and when he did, he said things like "The business of America is business." Industrialists and business tycoons loved him.

So the US was not a signatory to the Treaty of Versailles. In the final resolution of World War I, Germany was punished brutally, while Britain and France, as we

have seen, garnered the mandate to divide the Middle East and Near East between themselves. Wilson had sent a "fact-finding" team to Palestine. Under heavy pressure of the newly powerful Jewish lobby its report suggested that conditions called for large-scale Jewish migration. And this is where the totally distorted views in *Two Journeys to Jerusalem* of Nathaniel Crouch, (writing under the Anglicized name Robert Burton) were used as gospel by the British and the Americans. Crouch was Jewish and an ardent Zionist.

## ( 10 )

Serbia was well rewarded by the Allies. A new country called Yugoslavia was created. It included Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina (with no clear identity), Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro and Macedonia. The Serbian segment controlled this new artificial country; Muslim Kosovo was divorced from Albania and placed under Serbia. Soon, organized attacks began upon the Muslims of Yugoslavia and all Eastern Europe, along with reorganization of borders to erase Muslim identity. In 1918-1919, following another massacre against the Muslims in Bosnia and Albania, thousands were killed, many thousands were forced to escape to other countries.

The Serbs were originally the peasants of the area, and — according to eminent Slavic scholars — the most racially mixed. "Most of the Serbs living in Bosnia today have a strikingly dark complexion, inherited from the Balkan Vlachs. All historians agree that the Vlachs are not ethnically Slavic. In the Middle Ages they spoke their own language."<sup>8</sup> But after World War I, in particular, the Serbs had the power and the alliance with the Western world to rewrite the past in their history books. The Serbs now insisted once again that the Balkan Muslims were Turks in origin! As the victorious Allies were now the dominant recorders of history around the world, and provided their own versions of the evils of the Ottoman State which they had recently exterminated, much of the Serbian version of the origins of the Bosnians gained popularity in the Balkans, and gradually in most school texts in the Western world where knowledge of history was generally vague anyway. Some scholars insisted upon the truth. Prof. Ivo Banac, a Croatian Catholic, in his book *The National Question of Yugoslavia* (Cornell University Press, 1984), quotes Sakib Kokut, a Muslim who stood for Parliament in 1919, as saying later "We were the victims of religious fanaticism and were therefore forced to group ourselves on the religious basis." Prof. Banac adds "Indeed not only were the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina demeaned as 'Asians' but were constantly stereotyped as unstable and perverted...[But in fact] Muslims were not a foreign element. They, perhaps, *they alone, were autochthonous* [original] to Bosnia-Herzegovina. They were pure descendants of Bosnia 'Patarins' and King Tvrtko, the purest part of Croat and Serb people. *Unlike the Serbs, their blood was pure.* Bosnian Muslims only lacked a national name,"<sup>9</sup> he writes. The Serbs, on the other hand, are part-Slav and part-African in origin, he says, in his 1984 book. That denial of a name to the Muslims was not accidental, says Banac. A campaign commenced, again, after World War I to obliterate their Muslim identity. They

were forced to select either a Serbian or Croatian label to succeed in any endeavor; Prof. Banac cites the case of the Spaho brothers. Dr. Mehmed Spaho "who declared himself a Croat...his brother Fehim ...was a Croat. The third brother Mustafa Spaho, an engineer, was a Serb."

Bosnia-Herzegovina was now *physically* obliterated. "In 1929 King Aleksander partitioned Bosnia out of existence between four provinces, in each of which the Muslims were a minority. In 1939, Radic's successor Macek underwrote a new partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina, with thirteen of its counties going to the newly established autonomous Croatia and thirty-eight reserved for the projected Serbian portion of Yugoslavia. The division was accomplished by discounting the Muslims altogether"<sup>10</sup> says Cornell University's Prof. Banac.

## ( 11 )

After trying for thirteen centuries, the West had finally crushed Muslim lands entirely into submission. Britain even had a mandate over Palestine, which included Jerusalem. Consciously or subconsciously, much of the West celebrated this crowning conquest of what so many past Crusaders over the centuries had tried to achieve and failed. *This somehow seemed to justify for many of the Western public the methods and the injustices that may have been involved so far and those that were to follow.*

Not only were more textbooks being written to neutralize any sympathy for Muslims but writers were apparently being commissioned to write "novels" and "histories" to denigrate Muslims from the Balkans to Palestine. Cicely Isabel Fairfield, a failed actress whose ideology shifted from socialism to fanatical extremism depending on who her current lover was (she once expressed the view that men were lunatics and deserved castration and lobotomy), suddenly decided to make three brief visits to Yugoslavia and wrote (or had "ghost" written) a huge volume *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* under her pseudonym "Rebecca West." In its prologue, she confessed "I quite simply and flatly knew nothing at all about the south-eastern corner of Europe." But she glorified everything about the Serbs and condemned the Yugoslav Muslims soundly in it. Serious Slav scholars at the time and today "thought her portrait of their country was inaccurate...the real importance of the book, in 1941, lay in the call to action that it directed at England, and, by implication, America."<sup>11</sup> wrote Brian Hall of the *New Yorker*, i.e. asking Anglo-American to back the Serbs. In this refreshingly honest 1996 piece during the Bosnia holocaust, Hall says, "one of the most straight-ahead propaganda [piece] ever written." How much of it was her own, unaided work? What is highly significant is that "Rebecca West" admitted "years later that England's Ministry of Information had asked her to write it" writes Mr. Hall. And while it might be argued that at the time England wished to arouse hate towards Germany, Hall admits that after 1991, West's book is suddenly extremely popular in the West again, providing "the seductive argument that any action we might take in Bosnia was bound to be questionable, that surely it was better to keep our hands clean."



But another force, virtually unnoticed, commenced at the turn of the century, which would soon have enormous impact on future world history and the worst blow of all upon the Muslim world. In 1897, in Basle Switzerland, a new phenomenon was launched which would have an enormous impact on world history and spell disaster for the Muslim world which, hitherto, had been the most sympathetic major world power to support the rights and survival of Jews for centuries. A Jewish conference, (later called the first Zionist Conference) had been held, at which a new political Zionist agenda had been proposed. This stated that, after the centuries of prejudice and brutality that Jews had faced in Europe, which had left so many Jews of mixed blood wholly ignorant of the Hebrew language, even religion, they should have a Jewish identity in a homeland. Chairman Herzl then requested Sultan Abdul Hamid to allow Jews to form a homeland in a part of Palestine. While indigenous Jews were entirely acceptable, held important posts, even dominated Turkish financial institutions, the Sultan was concerned (correctly, as future events would prove) that this new entity would create yet another crucible for Western exploitation. So he rejected that request. "Herzl then considered Sinai and Cyprus ...but these were denied him by Cromer of Egypt and the British Colonial Office. In 1903 the British government made a lukewarm offer of territory in Uganda, which Herzl reluctantly agreed to consider", says Kinross but later rejected this offer. Many of the most prominent and wealthy Jews in Europe were actually *opposed* to what they saw as a disruptive movement of political Zionism. Some Jewish-British politicians like Lord Montague and German composer Mendelssohn were particularly opposed to the idea of creating a Jewish homeland. They objected to the very idea of a Jewish identity! They believed that Jews were now becoming assimilated into European society, many were wealthy, into industries and media "American Jews still showed little interest [in a homeland]. Religious leaders were divided, with the chief rabbi of Vienna declaring that Zionism was incompatible with Judaism. The weight of support for Zionism came from the mass of east-European Jews,"<sup>53</sup> says Manfield.

The Zionist movement increased in popularity among the Jewish masses especially after the eminent Disraeli's views became generally known to Jews. Rothschild was reportedly keen to move Jewish masses elsewhere, *away from Europe*; he used his enormous wealth to gain support for Zionist homeland, somewhere. Like Disraeli, he himself lived a very non-Jewish lifestyle, *would not move out of Europe, but sought a homeland for Jews elsewhere* During the Great War, Rothschild's banking and gunpowder industries were placed at the disposal of the Allies, Chyram Weisman, a Zionist chemist, had developed a new explosive technique which he offered to the British in exchange for a more positive support for the Zionist objectives.

After World War I, despite its promises to the Arabs while it held secret discussions with the Zionists, Britain wrestled with what its next move should be. Having at least delayed its promised independent Arab statehood for Palestine, Britain issued statements and White papers, using its considerable experience in chicanery to appease both the Jews and the Arabs. *There were those in the British government who were uneasy about the duplicity, of making false promises, to the*

*Arabs*, but overall, the British government, decided the old principle "Patriotism...the religion of the English [now British]" had one consideration above all petty issues of morals and justice: *What is in it for Britain?* And, therefore, *which decision would draw Britain closer to America, now more than ever, the breadbasket?*

As a result of the extraordinary European success in recent times over the Muslim world, the standard of living of the average European household had risen so fast as to equal that of the average Near-East Muslim household, even forge ahead. The riches of the Ottoman state, Egypt and Persia increasingly in European hands in recent times, poverty and illiteracy had become rampant among the Middle East Muslims. Europe's huge mass of illiterate and indigents were in dire straits after WWI. Many of Europe's poorest continued to cross the Atlantic to the USA and Canada, others to South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Most Muslim poor, fearing religious prejudice, stayed home.

Had there been Arab solidarity, after their hostility to Ottoman rule had achieved the end of that state, this might have produced results. But there was not only disarray but fierce rivalry for land among the various Arab chieftains against each other. The grandson of Abdullah Ibn Saud launched his battle-experienced forces to conquer even more of the neighboring territories so that by 1932, the new kingdom of Saudi Arabia had garnered what are its current boundaries. The new rulers of Transjordan, Iraq and Egypt were keen to keep their new "royal" status, not jeopardize it. In the meanwhile, more Jews steadily poured into Palestine from Europe. Britain gave them priority in choice lands in Palestine at great discounts. The Palestinians were maddened into periodic riots, the worst in 1929.

## ( 12 )

With growing literacy in the West, and now with the movies and radio not only in commercial hands, but in the hands of the Jews eager to advance the Zionist cause, history was being rewritten on a massive scale to appeal to the semi-literate audiences and readers. While "The Sheikh of Araby" became an exotic figure, all too often, using subtle suggestions, Islam was more than ever the enemy in films. Once this was ingrained into the American mind, degrading Islam also became a very profitable twist in plots. Now in the eyes of the Western public Islam "was stigmatized for being an excessively and essentially violent religion or for being inherently opposed to rationality and progress. If challenged, it is not unusual for people to look rather puzzled or bemused because *accuracy is still not exactly the point at issue when talking about 'Islam'.*"<sup>54</sup> The Muslim masses were now poor and illiterate. Western masses were told *this was how it had always been*. That presented a wonderful rationale: to rule over them, *civilize them*. Jews in the West were *no longer friendly or grateful to Muslims. Jewish history books had whitewashed history shamelessly, as did the movies*. They owed nothing to Muslims. The emerging literates in the West accepted it.

Knowledge about Asia in the USA in particular was ludicrously meager, at all levels. After the initial pioneering work in Europe, the US became the headquarters

of the new motion picture industry. The movies, that most persuasive medium before TV, could rewrite history, create images, love, hate, respect, contempt, among hundreds of millions of people, first in the US, then overseas, and makes huge fortunes for its owners at the same time. The "moguls" were mainly former "cloak and suit" tradesmen from New York's garment district, mostly Jewish. Volumes have been written about their lack of education, their obsessive love of money and their treatment of actors and writers as chattel. Writing decades later Roland Flaminio said "Louis B. Mayer, the most powerful man in Hollywood, isn't completely illiterate, but reading is a struggle for him and making sense of what he reads a bigger one."<sup>55</sup> The same in essence has been written by others who knew them, about the other Hollywood magnates like the Warner Brothers, David Selznick, Harry Cohn, William Fox and of course most of all Sam Goldwyn and the hilarious mess he constantly made of logic and the English language. P.G. Wodehouse, whom Hollywood enticed twice into contracts in the 1930s (apparently without knowing anything about his work, he said, except that he was a very famous English author) writes in his inimitable, hilarious style about these magnates, the "leper colony" of writers they created. In spite of their incredible shortcomings these rulers of MGM, Warner Brothers, RKO and other major studios made millions, ruled Hollywood, created the values of "Dollywood-on-the-Pacific" which ruled America's populace.<sup>56</sup>

Gradually, as almost all magnates who ran Hollywood happened to be Jewish, it was only natural, as a Jewish homeland in Palestine became a growing possibility, that movies should reflect: (i) Arabs as decidedly backward and therefore in grave need for the civilizing influence of West and (ii) stress the *common religious heritage of the Christians and the Jews*; to enforce this, it was important to present Islam as an imitative, meaningless religion.

In matters of history, Americans turned to the British. Americans, whose own history was mostly anecdotal anyway, were never *allowed* to develop reverence for truth in history except to offer lip service to it. All of history pouring into the minds even through the movies reflected (a) what the British taught, mixed with (b) what the semi-literate movie moguls felt they wanted American to believe and (c) most of all, *what they felt would please American audiences*. By now the British *did* have considerable academic expertise in school and college textbooks. Americans had emotional differences with Britain on a few topics, such as the American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. Ridiculing the Muslim world and of what was later to be labeled the "Third World" perfectly suited the colonial powers as well as European and American masses. Initially there was some reservation against British colonialism. But the Churchill-Eisenhower era ushered in a honeymoon that remains to this day.

The Christian Church itself had quickly recognized the enormous public relations and image-building values of the new celluloid medium. With great skill, as a people, the Jews especially in the US, had worked hard first in street-level hawking, progressing from that to financial and manufacturing world. Jews quickly recognized the importance of formal education but many saw the *greater* value of

gaining the riches and the propaganda values of the print media, the new broadcast media, and advertising: they sought out every opportunity to enter newspapers, magazines, radio and now, the exciting windfall profits of the movies which required fierce business tactics *and no education whatsoever* – it did not even require literacy. From being second-hand clothiers, some became millionaires and the "moguls" of Hollywood.

With increasing wealth, the Jewish community worked hard to become a powerful political voice. And gradually, often *reluctantly*, much of the Christian world recognized the reality of Jewish power in American life. It would take years to overcome anti-Jewish feelings *beneath the surface* among much of White America; Nazi atrocities helped arouse sympathies. Also, Jews became established in the "liberal" movements. Many Jews as late as the early 1960s were prominent in the Civil Rights movement along with the Blacks, but gradually that changed. Wealthy Jews, and then most Jews, became part of "White Middle America" Jewish-Black hostility replaced the old common front against prejudice.

But an even more dramatic switch in Jewish alignment, early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was its dramatic rejection of the Muslim patronage and friendship. The Jews, close to the Muslims for so many centuries, and despised, brutalized frequently in the Christian world, were now seeking a new *Judeo-Christian* identity, which many Muslims considered shameless ingratitude. *But Jews themselves never thought of it as ingratitude. As God's Chosen People, destined to rule on earth once again, they felt they had the right to use any and every situation to their advantage.*

In England, from the Cromwell era, in France after the revolution, in Germany, the Netherlands, all over Europe, with their growing wealth, first as bankers and now in business and industry in the US, especially with their concentrated hold on the communication industries — print, radio, theater, and the movies — Jews were gaining enormous power in the West. With his great influence, Disraeli, while seemingly friendly to the Turks, and his own "Middle-Eastern" ways, had laid a strong foundation to tell the Christian world that to be *Christians*, they had to be Jewish first. He had written novels about Zion and Jewish plight. His true influence in the development of political Zionism has never been officially assessed but it was enormous. Even those Jews whose ancestors were originally from the Middle East had, over the centuries of mixed marriages and colder climes, developed much lighter skin tones than the Jews who had remained in Asia. For the larger segment of Jews of Russia and Eastern Europe, whose ancestry was at best vague (and who had evolved a tongue called Yiddish, not Hebrew), there was no ancestral identification with the Arabs at all. And *they* were now the powerful European Jews in the USA. Apparently with the approval of the leaders of the US, Britain, France, and Russia, Balfour now himself announced "The four great powers are committed to Zionism and Zionism, be right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-old tradition, in present needs and future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land."<sup>57</sup>

Dr. Karen Armstrong rightly point out that just as the conquest of American Indian lands had been justified as taking what those "primitives" did not use properly;



Robert Cushman in 1622 had evaluated the American wilderness for his colonial employers; he wrote that the American Indians "do but run over the grass, as do the foxes and wild beasts. They are not industrious...as the ancient patriarchs therefore removed from straighter places into more room, where the land lay idle and waste, and none used it, though there dwelt inhabitants by them (as Genesis 13:6, 11, 12, and 34:21 and 41:20) so it is lawful now to take the land which none used to make use of it"<sup>58</sup> (italics added). Aware of this history, Nathaniel Crouch, writing under the pseudonym Robert Burton, deliberately suggested that Arab Palestine was in primitive, poor shape, desperately in need of knowledgeable developers. He cleverly wrote under the very British pseudonym, so his views won respect as *the* source of information about Palestine. "It was from Burton [i.e., Crouch] that the English people first heard that Palestine was a barren desert. Burton irrationally concluded that the past fertility of the country was due entirely to the Israelites", offering Biblical comments to prove that it became fertile land only because of the Israelites. "He did not seem to recall that the land had been flowing with milk and honey before the Israelites conquered it. Ignoring the considerable farming of the lands, Burton insists that the delay he claimed was due to the occupation for a thousand years by the Palestinians, the 'want of culture and tillage among the barbarous Infidels...who by their continuous wars and ravages have made it almost desolate and like a desert...a place forsaken by God.'"<sup>59</sup> It was Crouch who had established the image of Palestine which was still ingrained upon the minds of the British and the American decision-makers when they were considering the Zionist claim to a homeland in Palestine after World War I. Vaguely, Europe (Britain in particular) knew that Muslims, Jews and Christians had lived in harmony in Palestine and had for centuries. Peter Manfield, arguing on the same lines as Armstrong, writes "In Palestine...intercommunal relations between Muslims, Christians and Jews were generally harmonious... Jaffa became a household name in Europe through oranges from the great plantations around it" i.e., among those who knew where Jaffa was.<sup>60</sup>

So the image of undeveloped wasteland, which Crouch-style "expertise" projected for Western politicians, commentators and Western readers, prevailed. As for Islam, its negative image was reinforced by movie tales like *The Arabian Nights*, *Ali Baba*, *The Thief of Baghdad* and dozens more which many audiences even took to be the Middle East of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There was growing interest in "orientalism" in academic circles and some French and British writers tried to be fair about Islam. But even fair-minded scholars were usually handicapped, knowing only "pig" Arabic and having to rely on translations. After centuries of conscious and unconscious loathing towards Islam ingrained so deeply in the very genes of the Western public, it took a very courageous writer and publisher to risk backlash and becoming truly fair. Hardly anyone dared, other than those we have already noted.

One early work, the *Bibliothèque Orientale* of Barthelmy d'Herbelot, published 1697 still remained a "scholarly" source in the West, "a major source of Western knowledge about the Orient for over two hundred years" writes Armstrong. In the

*Bibliothèque*, under "M", "Mohammed" is described as "the famous impostor" and "founder of a heresy which has taken the name of religion, which we call Mohammedan. See entry under *Islam*." As Armstrong puts it, sardonically "He [d'Herbelot] had cut the Prophet down to size according to the European scheme of things."<sup>61</sup> In the same year an English orientalist Humphrey Prideaux published *Mohamed: the true Nature of Imposture*, which needs no comment. In 1708 Simon Oakley's famous *History of the Saracens*, Muhammad is described as "a very subtle and crafty man, who put on an appearance only of those good qualities, while the principles of his soul were ambition and lust." Oakley even claims that after obtaining facts about the Bible from a Christian priest, Muhammad killed him.<sup>62</sup>

Gibbons and innumerable historians had volunteered similar epithets. Later "orientalists" often followed the same path, so that it had become not only a safe tradition for writers to stay with what is "politically correct" but this avoided unnecessary dangers to sales, among other problems. But it is significant that as recently as 1970, *Cambridge History of Islam* hailed Oakley's work together with D'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque* as 'highly important' in broadening the 'new understanding of Islam'. If Islamic scholars in our own day praise D'Herbelot and Oakley, who had no hesitation about denouncing 'Islam' as heresy, it is no wonder that many of us lesser mortals are still so confused," says Armstrong.<sup>63</sup>

### ( 13 )

Once the US had entered World War I, in 1917 all of its considerable theatrical and movieband expertise had been used to boost US morale, fighting "Over There." However, even after the exposure of her troops to Europe during the last two years of the War, American troops came away with only a vague idea of Europe except for where they were stationed and the town or village from which they or their parents had emigrated to the US. The newly created IQ test, imported from France and administered to American GIs was not flattering: It said "47 per cent of [American] whites had the mental age of [children] of 12". What did gain enormous respect for the US among Europe's public was President Wilson. As regards Islam's image in the US, it is important to stress that it was never as negative in the early years of the American Experiment as it is today. Significantly, that there are towns all across the US, with Muslim names including *Mecca* and *Medina*. Could that happen in the 20<sup>th</sup> century? Importantly, in one of its earliest treaties, George Washington's government signed one with Algeria in 1796.

The fact is, the US began with a world vision, as the New World alternative to the Old World, even though most Americans knew very little about that Old World except that it had sick values. In reality, some Muslims had played a role in the official "discovery" and settlement of America. Who in contemporary America would believe today that according to an ancient Chinese *Sung* document, Muslims sailors had landed in America (called *Mulampi*) in 1178 AD? Or that Piri Reis (an Arab) had, in 1513, prepared the first world map, which included the American

continent? Or that a Moroccan Muslim had, after arriving on American shores in 1527, become one of the first three individuals to cross the continent?

History is written by the victors. By the time literacy, radio, the movies and television arrived, Muslims were no longer victors. However, it should not be assumed that early America embraced the Muslim world or even that it knew anything about it.

Some American founders were Deists. The US was founded on the same principles established on a universal creed, just as the French revolutionaries creed at the start was the Rights of Man the world over. George Washington had said "*The Government of the United States is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion.*" The comment was also made in the treaty which Joel Barlow, the first American Consul to Algiers, signed. In that Treaty of Peace and Friendship with Algiers in Tripoli on Nov 4, 1796, to emphasize that the new US bore no hostility towards Islam, the US put a clause in the treaty which said "As the Government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion; as it has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion, or tranquility of Musselmen (sic); and as the said States never have entered into any war or act of hostility against any Mehomitan [sic] nation, it is declared by the parties, *that no pretext arising from religious opinions shall ever produce an interruption of the harmony existing between the two countries*"<sup>84</sup>.

Over time, prejudice was established in the US, which looked upon Europe as the more advanced society, the *only* society to look for guidance. Nothing proves how persuasive European propaganda against Islam was than the fact, as we have noted, that even the highly intelligent, enlightened Thomas Jefferson was made to believe Islam was *against learning*.

Now, with the British as the expert guides of history in American schools, and with the immense power of visual media, the cumulative impact of vague but deeply ingrained hate and contempt for Islam, the belief that Asians and Africans were very backward and had *always* needed the civilizing influence of the West (i.e. *colonialism*), became deeply ingrained in the masses. In "historical" movies there was a cardinal rule: glory for Christianity, Judaism, the Crusades and adulation for every European hero of the past, real or mythical.

Education was growing very fast in the US. But it was education geared to training young people to work for the corporations, in offices, in factories, in industries. By 1900 there were 185 business and industrial combines with assets in excess of \$3,000,000,000, an astronomical sum at the time. In 1904, 1% of Americans owned 40% of the nation's wealth, while the average worker *earned \$1.51 a day*.

In 1870 there were only 500 high schools in all of the US. By 1900 there were 6,000 and growing. But history, especially *factual* history was not even a serious part of training the young for jobs. As for the universities, what were later called "ivy league colleges" in physical imitation of Britain's Oxford and Cambridge Universities were not by any means seats of learning, which they *did* become much later. Education was not a priority, money was. Colin Greer (in *The Great*

*School Legend*, 1972) reports that high school drop-out rate was immense. In the 1920's and 1930's, a federal study across the country in that twenty-year period showed that only 56 per cent of students graduated from high school. In New York City, only 40 percent of school students graduated. In the 1920s in Philadelphia only 19 percent of those entering high school managed to finish. As late as the 1940's, in Boston, *50 percent of the ninth graders failed to complete high school*.

Greer says college standards even in the "Ivy League" colleges were very poor. Until 1868 Harvard University graded students *by their behavior rather than academic excellence*. And as pay was very low, the 'best minds' did not become college professors. President Charles William Eliot of Harvard complained about this in 1869. He quotes several examples of student violence, *even deaths*, at various universities. By the end of the 1920s, education for America's growing millions, on national and world affairs, of history, came almost entirely from mass media. While there were the small-town newspapers (also usually owned by the local business or industrial magnet) the large circulation newspapers owned by business tycoons dominated the American scene, Hearst's *New York Morning Journal* and *San Francisco Examiner* and Alfred Pulitzer's *New York Herald* set new excesses in what was now called "yellow journalism." Magazines were emerging, heavily dependent, like the newspapers, on advertising. One Yale graduate, Britten Hadden had started *Time* magazine, devoted to a witty approach in lampooning greed and Big Business. He then employed Henry Luce (to whom Big Business was sacred) as his advertising manager. Hadden was suddenly very ill and died, aged only 29. He expressed the wish on his deathbed that Luce should never be sold his shares, for fear that the latter might gain control of the magazine and make it a Big Business organ. But (reports Mr. Swanberg in *Luce and his Empire*). Despite this, Hadden's shares were sold, after his death, to Harry Luce, the son of Christian missionaries ousted from China at the time of the Chinese Boxer rebellion against foreign exploitation. Luce immediately changed the magazine to one glorifying God (Christianity), Country (USA), the Military and Big Business. *Time* would, especially in the Eisenhower-Nixon regime and thereafter become one of the most powerful forces of opinion-making in the US and then around the "free" world.

*Wilson's pleaded for Federal control of the new medium of radio. This appeal was crushed, and radio became entirely commercial under President Harding.* Traders vied against one another for control. When the dust had settled, three corporate radio networks emerged. David Sarnoff and his brother Irving controlled National Broadcasting Company (NBC); William Paley, a cigar manufacturer, along with Isaac Levy, Leon Levy and Louis Chhheim took UIP, later renamed Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS). Later NBC had to divest itself of its "Blue" network and Leonard Goldenson, owner of several movie theaters, bought it and called it American Broadcasting Companies (ABC). There was a fourth network, Dumont, but it gradually faded away, after Television arrived in the 1930s, and the owners of the three radio networks managed to secure Congressional approval to add TV networks to their Radio networks. Prof. HJ Skornia (in *Television & Society*)



reports that Congress gave as much thought to this critical decision in 1934 as it would to voting on a street sign.

With profits as the primary objective, commercial media dominated the minds of literate and illiterate America. Broadcast media and movies glorified the country and corporations, an American version of "Patriotism...the religion of the English", a profitable formula already in place in print media. The common people were told they might be poor and struggling, but it was their countrymen, fellow-Americans, who owned the vast business and industrial empires, the skyscrapers, even the movie, radio and print empires. A corollary of this pride was ridicule of foreign lands (but *not* of close allies like the British, except when they seemed too uppity). Freedom of enterprise, without shackles, said media, was the way, so that all Americans could become rich. With Prohibition introduced in 1921 (President Harding continued to secretly get his liquor quota), there were new millionaires, gangsters of course more on the lines of the outlaw gangs, which had already become famous (some idolized) for over a century. But now while there was considerable criticism of the corruption that allowed gangsters to flourish with impunity, there was also a grudging respect, even open admiration for the likes of Al Capone who was not only a multimillionaire but mixed with "the Best People" (the term now employed for all very rich). There was no end or limit to prosperity. Therefore, borrowing from the future became The American Way and becoming very, very wealthy The American Dream. And the masses borrowed to buy stocks as Wall Street struck new record highs, as tycoons fought to outdo other tycoons, the millionaires to become instant multimillionaires, and the common people rushed to Wall Street to become rich and rise to the dizzy heights of the Best People which media told them so much about.

Harding's administration had ended in a cloud after many corruption scandals, Coolidge had carried on with similar policies. He banned immigration from China and Japan, placing embargoes and heavy duties on all imports, *but particularly on Japanese products as their competition was seriously eroding the share of some American manufacturers.* ("freedom of enterprise" was for Americans, not foreigners). The economy had shown signs of slowing down, with a recession, but Coolidge assured America of his expertise on the subject. "There is recession when products do not sell" he cleverly informed the public. When he died ("How could they tell?" the irrepressible wit Dorothy Parker asked) another Republican free-trader Hoover became President and assured America that "Prosperity is just around the corner." He was on a campaign swing in Detroit where Henry Ford introduced him as the "honestest, bestest man". That very day, national banks started to shut their doors.

In October 1929, the overheated Stock Market had collapsed, leading to the ruin of many tycoons and millions of the common people. The ripple effect of the wild gambling on Wall Street was felt everywhere. Banks panicked, loans to the devastated Germany were stopped; even the Rothschild banks, the lifeblood by money supplies to much of Europe, closed its Kredit-Anstalt. By 1932, nearly 4000 banks in the US closed, 33% of production ended and unemployment reached 14

million. Suddenly there was nothing to distinguish the tycoon from the common people as they stood outside charity kitchens for bread and soup.

## (14)

Britain was delighted when an even deeper bond had developed with the US after World War I, especially after the Republicans took the White House. This enabled Britain to use — especially before and after the Great Depression — the old American inferiority complex to the fullest by tantalizing wealthy Americans and American businesses with social acceptance. Woodrow Wilson, with his irritating morality, was soon dead. Britain still retained the very valuable land, labor and natural resources of India, (that included India, and what is now Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon) as its own. It had suzerainty over the new Middle Eastern kingdoms and Persia (Iran). Egypt had been provided a nominal "king", no other than a descendent of Mohammed Ali, who was very willing to do whatever he was asked to do, provided he was allowed lots of women, delicious food and wine. Other Muslim lands had been provided similar chieftains. And Britain owned Cyprus, Malta and Gibraltar, controlling the gates to the Mediterranean. In Australia, gold mines had been discovered as in the Union of South Africa, another Crown dominion, which was also saturated with diamonds, entirely controlled by Britain's de Beers, and, later, the Anglo-American Corporation.

Britain however had suffered heavy casualties in the War. And its feudal system was in trouble. Heavy taxes had to be applied right away to feed the empty Treasury and the bulk of this *had* to come from those who owned wealth: the aristocracy. These landowners in turn increased the rents upon the tenants and the produce of their villages.

Germany, which had, before the Great War, worried Britain so much as a competitor in ruling the destinies of nations, was now a bombed-out mass of rubble, on whom the severe conditions of the Armistice, and now the collapse of the banks and stoppage of loans ensured endemic destitution. Starving Germans, it was said, used wheelbarrows full of the devalued German marks to buy loaves of bread. Women and children sold themselves everywhere for pennies. So powerful was Britain now that even the accusation that Britain had used chemical gas in the War were soon forgotten as Britain denied it. At the Geneva Protocol in 1925, the use of chemical weapons was however made illegal officially.

Britain's treasury was nearly empty but it still ruled most of the world. In less than a century, this tiny island, with almost no natural wealth had, through cold-blooded skills of cunning and chicanery, spread its tentacles everywhere. Britain had used great skills in creating an image of superiority about itself, won fortunes overseas. Spying had also been developed into a powerful weapon. During the Crimean War, the enormous value of image-making on a mass scale, using privately-owned newspapers, was proven to be most profitable. Soon advertising was a profession for selling ideas and products in England and other countries, especially the US. In fact, World War I had become a "theatre" in more ways than

one; fierce propaganda was launched against the Germans and the Turks. But, in reducing the Germans to destitution and humiliation, Britain and France had allowed their greed to go too far.

## (15)

In the throes of despair, Germany found a charismatic leader. In 1921 Adolf Hitler took charge of the National Socialist Workers' Party, also called the Nazi Party. Hitler was arrested two years later after his planned uprising failed; he wrote *Mein Kampf* mostly in prison. Aside from emphasizing the inherent superiority of the German race, and the injustices meted out to it, he pointed to the Jews as the problems within Germany. Though a small minority, he argued, the Jews not only controlled the wealth of the nation but were willing to be traitors to Germany when their self-interest dictated, as in the recent War. In 1933, he came into power, appointed by President Hindenburg to head the government. At Hindenburg's death, he became President and Führer. Rejecting the Treaty of Versailles, he ordered rearmament at a fierce pace. In a remarkably short time, an extremely efficient German army and air force were sweeping through Europe. Hitler took Poland and Austria, announcing that they rightfully belonged to Germany. Britain's Neville Chamberlain is usually held responsible for "appeasing" Hitler. But that appeasement did not begin with Chamberlain but with the West's inaction with the fascist invasion of Spain. *In fact the West's behavior at the time towards Spain was to be so remarkably similar to that in Bosnia after 1991 that it is not unlikely that Western leaders of the 1990s studied the tactics used by their leaders to crush the Spanish government and decided upon similar tactics in Bosnia in the 1990s.*

In Spain, a democratic government had been elected in 1936, but the Church and extreme rightwing charged that they were a communist government and friends with the USSR. Generalissimo Franco commenced an invasion with massive military support from the Fascist governments of Hitler in Germany, Mussolini in Italy and the Catholic Church in Spain. The new Spanish government was very weak militarily; the West promptly enforced an "arms ban" on both parties, claiming that this was how the "civil war" could be ended. *But in enforcing the arms embargo on the Spanish government, the West was already supporting Franco, as Franco's forces were overflowing with arms, while the Spanish government was in great need of arms.*

By now most of the Western public was suitably trained to accept all its own media reports on foreign issues as gospel, and most of corporate media followed government directives, *at times reporting what had not yet occurred.* It was revealed many years later that when Movietone News reported early victories of Franco, *he had not even arrived inside Spain.* Western media presented him as a deeply religious man (Franco himself later claimed he was appointed by God) and when he did arrive with enormous military arms and ammunitions, and his forces (called the Phalangists), Franco lived at the local Bishop's castle. Franco's forces won easy victories of course with his massive military power and struck terror into the

citizen with atrocities. These brutalities by Franco's forces upon the Spanish masses gradually began to be reported by some reporters. As a result, individual volunteers from other countries (*including the US*) arrived, moved by the inhumanity and injustices of their own governments in allowing Franco free reign for his massacres.

Many years later, in 1994, BBC admitted in a *Timewatch* program, what some had suspected from the start: while the British government, from the PM down, claimed to be neutral, and intent only on ending the violence, it was *in secret communication of friendship* with Franco and Mussolini. Mussolini was, of course, very pleased with Britain's "secret" attitude; senior British Foreign Office officials wrote in their diaries how Franco's victory would create "excellent" business prospects later for Britain in Spain and Italy.

A few British Foreign Office junior officials of the time recalled to BBC in 1994 how they were shocked when they knew of Britain's covert involvement with Franco and Mussolini, but were sworn to silence. All through this period, British officials and newspapers, including Gaumont British News Films, insisted British officials "were leaving no stone unturned to end the war." In the meanwhile, Franco's forces devastated Spanish cities, targeted and massacred the masses, at times even those fleeing Spain. Picasso's later painting *Guernica* immortalized one such massacre. Franco won, installed his dictatorship in 1939 and was to remain in power until his death in 1975. After his death, his own son admitted (on American TV) that an express provision in the written agreement signed when Franco took charge, it was stated that his father would resign as leader after winning the "civil war". But his uncle (Franco's brother) had quietly had that paragraph deleted later. There was now *Entente Cordiale* (Triple Alliance) between Britain, France and Russia, whose shadowy influence in the Balkans was becoming more apparent than ever before.



**T**he 1st Edition of this book was published by Binghamton University's Institute of Global Studies, June 4 2001, after nine years of fulltime research by the author using *non-Muslim sources exclusively*. The book argued (1) truth has been victimized in most history books (2) unless the US becomes less blatantly pro-Israel, (with no concern for Jewish future) Muslim extremists may soon unleash their fury at a new level of violence (3) Christian Evangelists, aligned now with Zionist extremists, seek to further inflame Muslim extremists, so that Jesus Christ could be induced to return if Christians are at War at Armageddon.

As 9/11 did hit us three months later, further printing of this book was stopped at author's request, to allow the agony of that tragedy to subside. Now, with Dirty Tricks likely before Nov 2004, the 2nd Edition cannot be further delayed.

Is the US justified in warring against those committed to violence against the US? Of course it is. *But history has shown that just causes do not die away*. And Democracy is discredited by invading a country without UN authority, withholding human rights, taking thousands of innocent lives, all to unseat a tyrant created by the West. This has damaged US image the world over, even in much of Europe, where the public and some leaders have stood up this time for principles over sick Machiavellian alignments, at least so far.

Muslims have always respected Christians and Jews because Islam demands that they do so, *unless attacked*. And they have saved Jews from extinction at Christian hands in the past. If some extremist Muslims have taken to violence, they must be found and punished, but the reasons *why* they have changed from friend to foe *must* be examined honestly, so that gross injustices may be corrected swiftly without further waste of innocent human lives and more trillions of dollars. That is the *civilized* approach.

This book traces history – religious, political, sociological – over 2000 years. Some facts may surprise many, astound a few, and shock millions trained, in this Age of Mediocrity, not to look for the truth beyond the Silver Screen, their TV sets and other tentacles of corporate media and its agenda.



**About the Author:** Naturalized American of Indian birth, with four decades in multinationals, advertising agencies and media, including Lever Brothers, Richardson-Vicks, Cadbury-Fry, Clorox, Ogilvy & Mather, D'Arcy McManus Masius, VanSant Dugdale, London Press Exchange; The Washington Post (during Watergate), freelance writer, editor, author of *The Rape of A Noble Ideology, USA in Perspective, 1783-1985* (1986)